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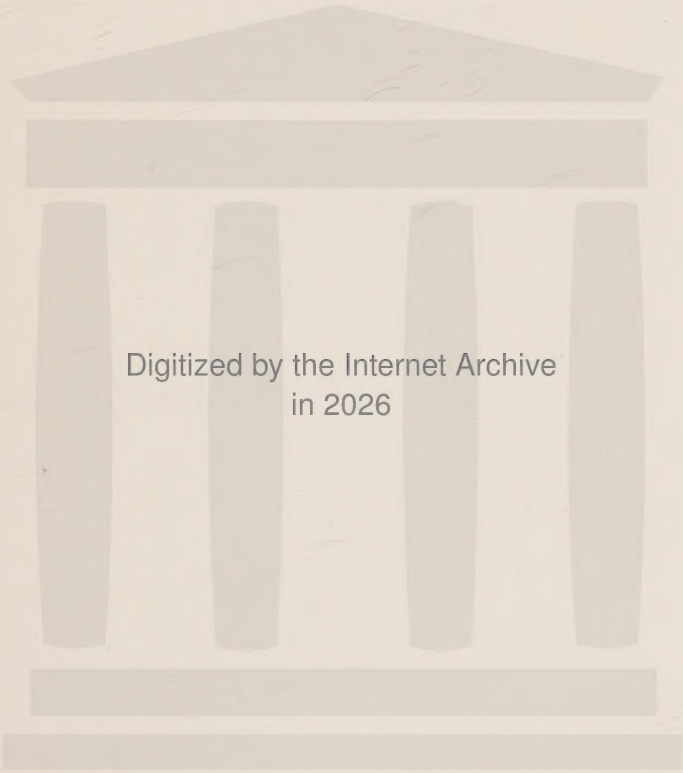
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LIFE AND LABOUR

OF THE

PEOPLE IN LONDON

LIFE AND LABOUR

OF THE

PEOPLE IN LONDON

BY

CHARLES BOOTH

ASSISTED BY

JESSE ARGYLE, ERNEST AVES, GEO. E. ARKELL
ARTHUR L. BAXTER, GEORGE H. DUCKWORTH

Third Series: Religious Influences

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SOUTH-EAST AND SOUTH-WEST LONDON

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Table of Contents

Pages

PART I. THE SOUTH-EAST

CHAPTER I. DEPTFORD (*with Sketch Map*) 3-40

(1) General Character of Population... ... Page 3
(2) Old Deptford Parishes ... ... ,, 11
(3) Newer Deptford ... ... ,, 22
(4) The Southern and Western Parishes ... ,, 28
(5) Local Administration ... ... ,, 37

CHAPTER II. GREENWICH (*with Sketch Map*) ... 41-74

(1) Introductory ... ... Page 41
(2) The Poor Part of West Greenwich ... ,, 42
(3) The Remainder of West Greenwich ... ,, 50
(4) East Greenwich ... ... ,, 59
(5) East Greenwich (continued) ... ... ,, 70
(6) Local Administration ... ... ,, 73

Coloured Map of Deptford and Greenwich, with Notes and List of Places of Worship

CHAPTER III. WOOLWICH, CHARLTON and PLUMSTEAD (*with Sketch Map*) 81-133

(1) Charlton ... ... Page 81
(2) Three Aspects of Woolwich ... ... ,, 90
(3) Religious Effort in Woolwich ... ... ,, 99
(4) Plumstead ... ... ,, 111
(5) Various Opinions ... ... ,, 119
(6) Social Influences ... ... ,, 124
(7) Local Government, &c. ... ... ,, 130

Coloured Map, with Notes and List of Places of Worship

CHAPTER IV. ILLUSTRATIONS (THE SOUTH-EAST) 139-146

24 Apr '42K

Pages

PART II. THE SOUTH-WEST (*with Sketch Map*)

CHAPTER I. BATTERSEA 149-175

(1) Nine Elms and Neighbourhood ... ... Page 149
(2) From Battersea Park to Lavender Hill ... „ 156
(3) Old Battersea and the River Side ... „ 161
(4) Local Administration ... ... „ 173

CHAPTER II. CLAPHAM 176-191

(1) From the Religious Point of View ... Page 176
(2) From the Home Point of View ... ... „ 186
(3) Clapham to Kennington ... ... „ 190

Coloured Map of Battersea and Clapham, with Notes and List of Places of Worship in the South-West

CHAPTER III. WANDSWORTH AND PUTNEY ... 197-218

(1) The Valley of the Wandle ... ... Page 197
(2) Putney ... ... „ 207
(3) Local Administration ... ... „ 216

Coloured Map, with Descriptive Notes

CHAPTER IV. ILLUSTRATIONS (THE SOUTH-WEST) 221-230

SOUTH-EAST AND SOUTH-WEST LONDON

PART I

THE SOUTH-EAST

Date of the Inquiry in this District: 1900

CHAPTER I

DEPTFORD

§ 1

GENERAL CHARACTER

On the south bank of the Thames one passes from Bermondsey to Rotherhithe, and from Rotherhithe to Deptford, and from Deptford to Greenwich, and thence to Woolwich and Plumstead, where finally London ends, really as well as nominally. Elsewhere it is different. Beyond Poplar lies Canning Town, Bow extends into Stratford, and from Clapton one crosses the Lea Valley into Leyton ; while Walthamstow, Tottenham, Hornsey and Finchley to the north, Willesden to the north-west, Acton and Ealing and Chiswick to the west, Wimbledon to the south-west, and Penge due south, are all actually extensions of London. The South-East has its only parallel at Putney, where, beyond the open areas of Roehampton and Barnes, there lie indeed a series of riverside towns and villages, but these are hardly to be considered an extension of London any more than is Croydon or even Brighton. The striking peculiarity of South-East London is that not only do the houses come to an end within the metropolitan boundary, but that in a manner they do so three times over. Docks and railways make a distinct break between Rotherhithe and Deptford ; the Creek and the Ravensbourne sever Deptford from

Greenwich ; whilst Woolwich and Plumstead make in effect a town by themselves, with streets ending everywhere in common land or open fields, excepting towards the river.

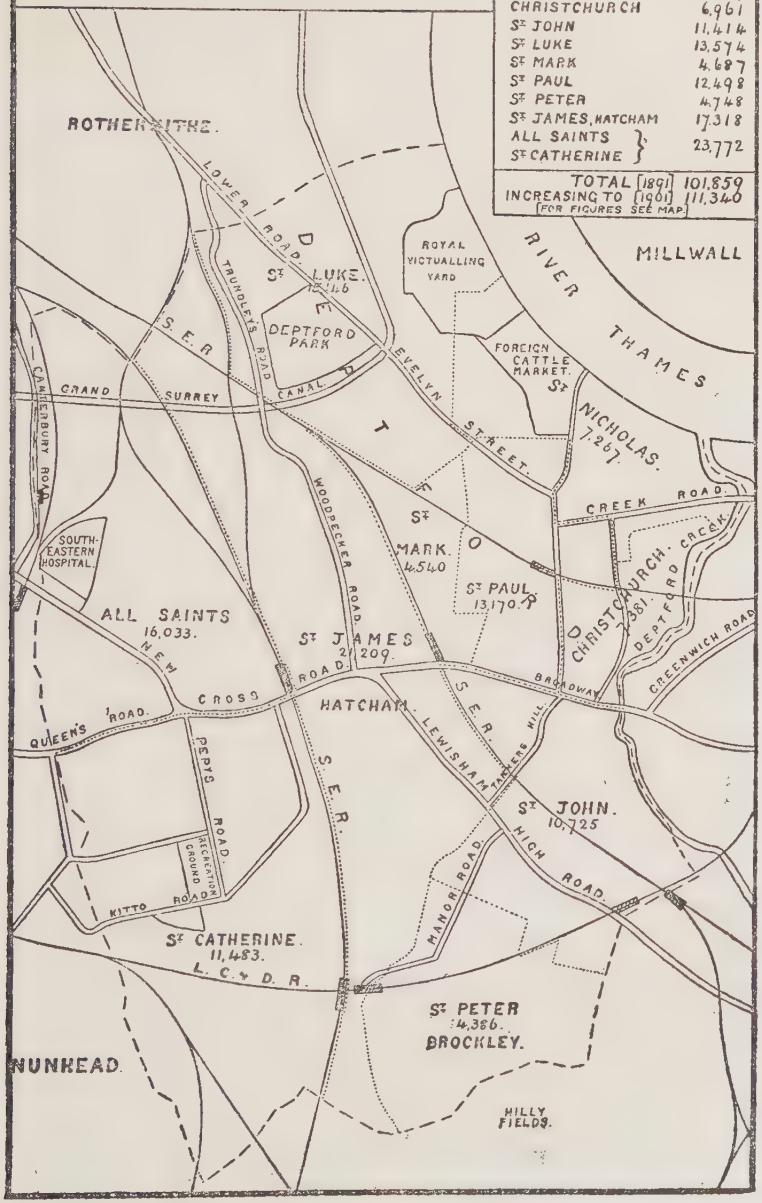
All these places formed in truth a chain of old marine villages now linked, or becoming gradually linked, with London through a common hinterland, but otherwise still curiously isolated.

Deptford proper consists of two parts. There is Old Deptford lying between the Creek and the High Street, compact with an ancient poverty which extends in some measure to the south of Deptford Broadway by the side of Mill Lane and Tanner's Hill ; and there is New Deptford (which includes part of New Cross) consisting, to use legal language, of 'all that piece or parcel of land to the west of the High Street and east of the L. B. & S. C. Railway, with the houses and messuages thereon,' most of these having been built in quite recent years on fields or market gardens. The district is cut up by branching railway lines, which, unfortunately, have been constructed at so low a level that roads cannot conveniently be carried under them, thus adding much to the difficulties of local life. In this newer part, which is now all built over, there are a few poor streets, including one notorious spot, but the great bulk of the houses have been specially built for and are occupied by comfortable working-class families. To the south lies the remainder of New Cross, including the well-to-do districts of Hatcham and Brockley, which, though portions of the civil parish of St. Paul, hardly count as Deptford. Here, building is still going on, but it is all of middle-class character, and so far as the erection of new houses is concerned, there is no room for working-class extension. A hope, however, is expressed by one of our witnesses that the growing pressure on house room in the north may be relieved by the

SKETCH MAP OF DISTRICT.
DEPTFORD.
VOL V. CHAPTER I.

POPULATION (1891) OF ECCLESIASTICAL PARISHES	
DEPTFORD	
St NICHOLAS	6887
CHRISTCHURCH	6961
St JOHN	11,414
St LUKE	13,574
St MARK	4,687
St PAUL	12,498
St PETER	4,748
St JAMES, HATCHAM	17,318
ALL SAINTS, St CATHERINE	23,772
TOTAL (1891)	101,859
INCREASING TO (1901)	111,340

[FOR FIGURES SEE MAP.]



STATISTICS *bearing on the* AREA INCLUDED IN SKETCH MAP NO. 17. *Described in Chapter I. (Part I., Vol. V.).*

CENSUS STATISTICS.

Showing Increase or Decrease of Population.

Population in				Increase per Cent.	
1881.	1891.	1896.	1901.	1881-1891.	1891-1901.
84,653	108,173	114,995	117,719	27·8 %	8·3 %

Density of Population.	
1891.	1901.
Persons per Acre.	
64·2	70·3
Inhabited Houses.	
15,756	16,696
Persons per House.	
6·9	7·0
Number of Acres.	
1685	

Age and Sex in 1891.

Age.	Males.	Females.	Together.
Under 5 years	7,315	7,462	14,777
— 15 ,,	12,339	12,695	25,034
— 20 ,,	4,956	5,467	10,423
— 25 ,,	4,492	5,215	9,707
— 35 ,,	8,407	9,058	17,465
— 45 ,,	6,163	6,479	12,642
— 55 ,,	4,332	4,658	8,990
— 65 ,,	2,425	2,868	5,293
65 and over	1,547	2,295	3,842
Totals ...	51,976	56,197	108,173

NOTE.—The area included in the Sketch Map includes the Civil parishes of St. Paul and St. Nicholas, Deptford, except a small portion of St. Paul, which being ecclesiastically part of St. Katherine's parish, Rotherhithe, is omitted. The figures given refer to the whole of the two civil parishes.

SPECIAL ENUMERATION for this INQUIRY (1891).

Sex, Birthplace and Industrial Status of Heads of Families.

Sex.		Birthplace.		Industrial Status.			Total Heads.
Male.	Female.	In London.	Out of London.	Employers	Employees	Neither.	
19,480 84 %	3,739 16 %	11,787 51 %	11,432 49 %	1,793 8 %	16,725 72 %	4,701 20 %	23,219 100 %

Constitution of Families.

Heads.	Others Occupied.	Unoccupied.	Servants.	Total in Families.
23,219 (1·0)	20,506 (·88)	60,105 (2·59)	2,964 (·13)	106,794 (4·60)

Social Classification according to *Rooms Occupied* or *Servants Kept*.

	Persons.	Per Cent.	
4 or more persons to a room	2,314	2·1	Crowded 20·0 %
3 & under 4 ,, ,,	4,036	3·7	
2 & ,, 3 ,, ,,	15,410	14·2	
1 & ,, 2 ,, ,,	26,442	24·5	Not Crowded 80·0 %
Less than 1 person to a room	4,913	4·6	
Occupying more than 4 rooms	39,582	36·6	
4 or more persons to 1 servant	7,010	6·5	
Less than 4 persons to 1 servant & 4 to 7 persons to 2 servants	3,395	3·1	
All others with 2 or more servants	728	·7	
Servants in families	2,964	2·7	
Inmates of Institutions (including servants)	1,379	1·3	
Total	108,173	100	
Living in Poverty (as estimated in 1889)		34·6 %	100 %
,, in Comfort (,, ,,)		65·4 %	

conversion to working-class flats of some large unoccupied houses in the southern part of the borough.

Old Deptford itself may be said to be divided into two parts by the railway, that on the river side near Deptford Green still retaining the picturesque charm of red tiled small-windowed houses, which is lacking altogether in the depressing district to the south. The inhabitants differ also. North of the railway and, even more definitely, north of Creek Road, there is a certain old-established solidity about the conditions of life even among the poorest. The bulk of the population are waterside workers or those employed at the cattle market. They are a careless, hand to mouth class ; heavy drinkers, rather rough, but not criminally disposed ; and a peculiarity of this district being the large number of fully licensed houses, their taste for drink is very amply met. The neighbourhood has seen better days : houses of three storeys which have been good family residences are now occupied as tenements. An extract from our notes on one of the streets, the worst, will help to show how great the fall has been : 'Rough women are on the doorsteps, one of them with a bandaged head, others with black eyes. Shoeless children run about, and an old harridan sits smoking a clay pipe. The prevailing dirt makes itself felt by a faint foetid smell, only over-powered in places by disgusting stenches.' This is the bottom. Above this lie various degrees of badness, and also much that is quiet and respectable. In Armada Street the London County Council has, not without incurring hostile local criticism, built several blocks of well arranged dwellings which are a refreshing contrast to some others that might be mentioned, and which have also been specially constructed for working-class occupation. St. Nicholas' Garden, on the north side of Wellington Street, within a stone's throw of the beautiful old tower of St. Nicholas' Church, is well stocked with

shady trees and has been extended to Benbow Street, the northern portion being set apart as a children's playground. Something has been done, and more may yet be done to make this bit of London again a pleasant place of habitation.

Nor is the part which lies between Creek Road and the railway at all beyond such possibility, with St. Paul's Church and the open space attached to it as a centre, and enlivened by the gay rush of traffic eastward along Creek Road and southward by the High Street. Here one still finds a few vacant spaces. At the end of one court there is even a 'small detached, one-storey cottage, with a large vegetable garden and a notice "new laid eggs for sale;" but with this may be contrasted a little cemented square of six houses 'in one of which a murder was committed a few months ago,' and by the Creek side there are various works, 'some rather redolent,' dealing with asphalt, tar, and artificial manures.

South of the railway there is less variety, and little to mitigate the discomfort of low life exampled in such spots as Giffin Street, Regent Street and Hale Street. The criminal element is stronger than to the north, and living here are many prostitutes of very low type.

The police recognise that there has been a general improvement throughout the district, resulting in less violence and crime; there are fewer charges at the police court, but to the eye it looks no better, nor does it seem any less poor than ten years ago.

Mill Lane, lying south of the Broadway, contained one of the worst spots in Deptford. What remains of it is still bad, but the greater part is down and the inhabitants dispersed. The street consisted mainly of common lodging-houses, harbouring a floating population, and it is probable that their dispersal has injuriously affected the neighbourhood in the Regent

Street area of Christ Church. There have also been clearances near Tanner's Hill, and others are possible which may sweep away entirely the remaining patches of poverty which the map shows there amid the otherwise prosperous district to the south of New Cross Road.

The part of Deptford lying west of the High Street, though it may be divided into several sections, exhibits on the whole a uniform character. While to the east poverty and various shades of low life prevail, and show little change for the better, to the west there is general prosperity, and in many parts a marked improvement has taken place during the past ten or twelve years. At one time some parts of this region suffered from an excess of houses, for building outran the demand, and the peculiar dangers of this form of speculation were incurred. When there were two houses for every possible tenant neither houses nor tenants were kept in order. Any occupant was acceptable, and with twenty other houses to be had for the asking, tenants did not care whether they remained or not. Rents sank very low, and the houses went to pieces. The result was ruinous to the owner, and brought no comfort to the occupier; but now, with higher rents, everyone is better off. A growing population has filled the houses; the landlords, having a choice, are able to reject or evict bad tenants; good ones hesitate to leave; order and decency rule. The property has benefited, but so have the occupiers, the higher rents representing better value to them as well as to the landlord.

Here and there a street has been degraded beyond redemption. Streaks of purple and patches of blue may be seen on the map, which shows also one street as bad as anything on the other side of the High Street. I allude to Baildon Street, which, though reported by the police as better, looked to us as black as ever,

a view confirmed by the City missionary who visits there, and who considered that the spot had become worse since the Mill Lane demolitions. On the whole, the colour of the district on our map is pink, and the bulk of the inhabitants are of the type that this colour represents. In describing the efforts made to touch the religious sense of these people, I shall be able to show incidentally what manner of men they are.

The Hatcham Park Estate, which lies to the west of the railway lines, leads on to the middle-class district to the south. Passing westward from Deptford, the status of the people appears to rise gradually, culminating in this estate. It is the home of the well-to-do class of working men, of clerks, and others in regular employ, many of whom have probably bought the leases of their houses. Some of these houses accommodate two families, while in other cases, unless the family is large, a lodger may be taken. The streets are wide and the houses well kept, with nice gardens. A general aspect of comfort and respectability characterizes the place. The women are well dressed, and though the number of children doubtless must be great, they are not seen, for they do not play in the streets. On the estate itself there are only two public-houses; but there are several shops with grocers' licences, and some public-houses are to be found in the neighbouring main road.

Beyond the middle-class district which slopes up to Telegraph Hill lie the open fields of undeveloped London, into which population is extending alongside of the railway, and here there are some patches of poverty, each one doubtless with its special history, each one open to explanation, could we seek it out.

§ 2

OLD DEPTFORD PARISHES

(A) *Work of the Religious Bodies*

St. Nicholas, St. Paul and Christ Church are the old Deptford parishes. The first, with its antique church, is pure Deptford; but, by what appears a strange fatuity, it has been annexed to the municipality of Greenwich, with which it is only linked by Creek Bridge. The old waterside element found in St. Nicholas is present also in St. Paul's, but half St. Paul's parish lies to the west of the High Street and while the southern portion falls more into line with Christ Church, the northern part is widely different in character, being hardly distinguishable from St. Luke's.

In the parish of St. Nicholas the Church of England has been unfortunate. Some scandal there has been in the past—some hopelessness leading to inaction, and some downright neglect. Thus the present curate in charge has had uphill work. When he came the church was empty and the work of the church practically dead, even the Sunday schools being managed by the lay element without any intervention of the clergy. But the people are found to be pleasant and friendly and far from hopeless to work among, the account given of them confirming what we have already stated. They are for the most part poor, and in many cases rough-mannered and drunken, but are largely a settled population, who have lived here for years, and even for generations—not vicious or criminal in any way, 'and as different from the low poor of Christ Church as chalk from cheese.'

The old church is no longer empty; it gathers the usual 'one hundred' in the morning and the usual 'two hundred' in the evening, and finds proof of earnestness among those who attend in the large

proportion of communicants. The Sunday school (from which the parson is no longer excluded) has filled up its ranks; and acquaintance with the people in their daily lives is obtained by visiting, in connection with a Provident Bank which counts eight hundred depositors. If too much be not expected, this may be called success; but the curate in charge feels the insecurity of his position and, hampered by lack of workers and funds, imagines (perhaps quite vainly) that if he were better equipped a great deal more could be done. He mentions especially the lack of organizations to deal with the boys who swarm about the streets at night.

The Primitive Methodists have a tiny chapel in Creek Road which is linked with two others. One of these has already been mentioned in Rotherhithe, the other is in Hatcham Park, outside of the district we are now dealing with. Each chapel has a small but earnest membership, and engages in Sunday school work. There is also a small Mission Hall in Hughes Fields, but otherwise, apart from the Church of England, the religious work here has its origin outside, consisting of efforts made by the Congregational Church in the High Street to serve their poor neighbours.

In Christ Church parish, which is the part we have described as almost irredeemable and unmitigated in its low life, we find an elderly vicar and an empty church, with small Sunday schools and very little activity of any kind, beyond constant visiting. The vicar is 'always about' among his people. He admits, however, that from a spiritual point of view 'you can't get at them.' The mothers' meetings, which are large, he characterizes as 'artificial.' The people living in the poorer streets, who form nearly the whole population, are exhaustively catalogued as 'labourers, dockers, carmen, costers, hawkers, wood-

cutters, laundresses, shirt and button-hole makers, bottle washers, flower girls, lace sellers, toy makers, cripples, mendicants, and prostitutes'—the last chiefly in Stanhope Street. The failure of the Church here is patent, so much so that the Church Pastoral Aid grant has been withdrawn, on the ground that 'no one came to church,' yet it may be doubted whether a greater exhibition of 'vigour' would really effect anything more, from the spiritual point of view, among these 'ungodly, but not infidel' people, than does the constant kindly presence of a good and, in his own way, a hard-working old man. It is rather on the material and social side that something more might be accomplished (and something, perhaps, left undone) with advantage. In place of a provident collecting bank, as at St. Nicholas, we find here much 'ticket relief,' and some pride shown in the numbers helped. 'I don't pretend to help them permanently,' the vicar admitted. He will not allow that his people are as black as they are painted. He stands up for them, and they, I feel sure, would stand up for him.

The Sunday school work, partly abandoned by the Church in this, so to say, benighted parish, has been assumed by the Deptford Ragged School and Mission in Giffin Street. This old-established institution does not lack vigour, and employs about seventy voluntary workers. Its honorary secretary, a brisk business-like man in early middle life, describes the population much as did the vicar. He has worked here as a volunteer for twenty years, and says he finds but little change in that period, for though, individually, half the people are continually shifting, the general character remains much the same. He, too, says that 'although we do a lot of work, we merely *touch* the people.' The children, however, attend the school in large numbers, and many of the women, drawn mainly

from the more permanent inhabitants, come to their meetings. It is also claimed that a considerable number of the children remain under religious influence. To this end there is a very large sewing class for girls and young women, at which some two hundred and eighty muster every Monday evening—encouraged to come by liberal prize giving for cleanliness, punctuality, &c., and by the customary treats. The mothers' meeting too, though of a religious character, has pecuniary advantages attached, and it is candidly admitted that, 'with so much cadging and hypocrisy about,' it is not easy to know who are and who are not genuinely amenable to religious influence. In no way can much be done with the men, and this is true even of the most permanent inhabitants. The men will not come with the women, and thus separate accommodation, the expense of which cannot be met, is described as essential. Such is the explanation put forward, but it does not come near the root of the matter, which is simply that Ragged School Gospel-mission work in London never finds value in the eyes of the men. More encouraging and fruitful is the special work undertaken among crippled children—part of a widespread movement with which we have come in contact in various parts of London. No fewer than two hundred and forty-seven cripples are on the books of this mission.

The inactivity of the Church in the parish of Christ Church has been accompanied also by incursions from other religious bodies. 'Some time ago' (says the vicar) 'the only workers were Church of England, Congregationalist, and Roman Catholic;' now all sorts are trying—and he feels that in religion such competition is fatal. The poor parts of Deptford are, indeed, a veritable 'Tom Tiddler's ground' for missions, and we hear of one woman busy 'at the wash-tub' calling out, 'You are the fifth this morning!'

St. Paul's parish is, in its way, a religious centre. On either hand, as one walks up or down the High Street, are churches of various denominations—Wesleyans and Congregationalists, Roman Catholics and the Society of Friends, with various mission buildings in the side streets, and a Baptist church hard by in Octavius Street. The parish church itself—a stately pillared temple approached through a sacred grove—stands a little back from the road to the east of the High Street, the district it serves lying mostly to the west. It possesses a strong organization—three curates, 'an invaluable nursing sisterhood,' thirty district visitors, thirty to forty Sunday school teachers, and a large choir. 'In a moderate and reasonable way,' the rector has introduced somewhat High practices, which are apparently not objected to. Though rather empty on Sunday morning, the church is filled at night, and there are no fewer than five hundred communicants. The 'regular things' are actively worked. Sunday schools and penny bank, Bible-classes, mothers' meetings, working girls' club, men's club, provident club, slate club; all backed up by systematic visiting and considerable charitable relief, 'mainly by ticket,' but much embarrassed by overlapping, due to the varieties of religious effort put forth by other churches, of which there are reckoned 'thirteen schismatics.' This account is confirmed from the other side. The minister of one of the Nonconformist bodies tells us that the churches, especially St. Paul's, are very active, taking from them 'all they can by promises or threats.' Truly a 'fatal competition,' as the vicar of Christ Church called it. There is no want of friendliness with the Church of England, but, as is the case with all High Churches, co-operation is impossible.

With the exception of the Roman Catholics, all the Nonconformist churches draw their financial support

from the west of the High Street, if not from further still. The numbers, nowhere very large, are greatest with the Congregationalists, whose church is actually in Christ Church parish, but with them are falling away owing to removals, and many who come from a distance are only held together by a regard for old associations, the pastor having been here for twenty-five years. Moreover, it is an historic church, dating from 1460. It was once very influential, and is still a considerable power. But the richer people leave, and the respectable classes, among the not rich, cannot stand the language of the streets nor the sights at night, dread to bring up their children in such surroundings, and tend also to go. Thus the congregation is not what it was, and only claims that 'others are no better off than we,' adding 'nor worse.' There are a good number of workers. Besides the operations of the central church, there are other schools and a mission hall in St. Nicholas' parish. The parent congregation, which is not now very numerous, but from which a considerable number of workers is forthcoming, includes a proportion of higher working class, Board School teachers, and others of lower middle class.

The Baptists here are a small body, but work very hard and make their church attractive with an excellent choir. They have services of song in winter, and hold a very good open-air meeting on Sunday evenings in summer at the corner of Douglas Street; they, too, complain of the adverse effect of removals. There is also a minute community of 'General Baptists,' who are in effect Unitarians. The present minister claims to have doubled the attendance. Even when thus doubled it consists of but five or six adults and a few children in the morning, and some twenty-five or at most thirty adults at night. The congregation, such as it is, is working class. They have one hundred children in their Sunday school. The chapel (a very old one,

dating back from the Commonwealth) is willingly lent for social purposes.

The Wesleyans, having parted with their big building to the Salvation Army, have at present only a school-room chapel, but are 'holding the fort,' and looking forward to development on mission lines. To this end they contemplate building a church in the new part of Creek Road. They are hopeful and (as they say) 'aggressive.'

Now and again the Free Church Council arranges a joint mission amongst the various Nonconformist bodies, and on these occasions the churches chosen are crowded, but those who attend come mainly from other neighbourhoods. Taken altogether, the work of the Nonconformists here amounts to not very much.

Even though we add the two or three mission-rooms, and a small Salvation Army corps, and give its utmost value to the work of the Established Church, we cannot but accept the view that the mass of the population remains untouched on the religious side.

There are indeed considerable numbers of Roman Catholics of whom as usual a much larger proportion recognise the claims of religion than is the case amongst those who, if asked the question, would account themselves Protestants. But although the priests move about among their flock with authority, and although their great church in the High Street is better filled than others on Sunday morning, their people seem to be more than usually difficult to handle. Out of a total Catholic population of five thousand to six thousand, not more than fourteen hundred on an average appear to attend the various Masses.

At Deptford, we are told by a priest who has had experience there, 'begging is the first profession,' and apart from the work of the religious bodies, the claims of poverty, however expressed and however regarded, are here met by a very large number of relief associations, to some of which we shall refer.

(B) *Social Condition*

Whatever be the value or success of the efforts made to cope with it, we have convincing evidence as to the physical and moral, as well as spiritual, destitution of the larger part of the inhabitants of the parishes of Christ Church and St. Nicholas, as well as of the contiguous portions of St. Paul's.

Among the evils from which the people suffer, drink stands first. 'It is almost impossible,' says one of the clergy, 'to sleep at nights owing to the shouting and singing. The police can't or won't cope with drunken disorder and noise. For drink it is the worst place I know.' 'Drink,' says one of the missionaries, 'is, if anything, worse than ever.' 'The real cause of poverty if you go back,' says another minister, 'the real mischief, is the drink. If you could do away with it—but you can't—you would change the aspect of the place. Thriftlessness, through drink, is *the* evil. You see children with hardly anything to cover them, running in and out of the public-houses with great jorums of beer.' And, as bearing on this, the headmaster of a Board school, where the children all come from the poorest streets, says that: 'In the matter of clothing and feeding, not much can be done for them, the difficulties are so great. Clothes given are at once pawned; and it is hard to find out the suitable cases for meals.' 'Yet,' this witness continues, 'the poverty of the children is very great, as indicated by their clothing, which is always wretched, and in winter by semi-starvation. Two or three days of cold weather and they all look pinched.' Another witness gives a terrible picture of life in the poorest part of Watergate Street, where there are two large old houses let by the room, in which people sleep on the stairs and anywhere, and in Rowley Street, where there are forty families—

dock labourers, drovers and street sellers—living in nineteen small houses. He adds, 'They are very poor, but earn plenty of money—it is the drink.' Such people move frequently, but do not go far. 'They do not change to better themselves, but because they cannot pay the rent; and the landlord is glad to be quit of them; but they must stop near their work.' The place, he thinks, does not become any better. Drinking among women is on the increase. The women have their special houses and will sit in the bar, peeling their potatoes as they drink and talk. Elderly women lead respectable young married women astray—pawn for them, &c. A local rule of etiquette is mentioned, according to which a bride is expected to stand a 'go' of gin. People admit now and again that the habit is bad and wrong, and sign a pledge, but do not keep it. One instance was mentioned of a woman whose husband fell down in drink and broke his neck—and who had herself signed again and again, but only 'supposed it must be the booze to the bitter end.' There is about it a kind of fatalism; so entirely hopeless in most cases are good resolutions, so weakened any power of resistance. Of the evil influence of older women on young, going far beyond the mere effects of bad example, we hear often; not alone in Deptford, nor solely concerning drink. Unfortunately it applies to bad habits of every kind. It is terrible, but it is true, that, as regards all ordinary factory work, no careful employer will allow his girl employees to be in the same rooms with the elder women.

The vicar of St. Paul's, referring to the connection of drink and degradation with poverty, mentioned the extensive industrial re-adjustment which followed the closing of the Deptford Dockyard in 1869. The wages are lower at the Victualling Yard than they were at the Dockyard, and a different class of men is

required, and the work at the cattle market, though well paid, is degrading. From one reason or another the men rarely work the week through. These economic changes have brought in their train an increase of gambling and betting, with much excessive drinking and low life, and have not yet been overtaken ; but as Deptford had solid industrial resources, it was to be expected (the vicar thought) that things would gradually settle down and be better.

Except the 'bullies' who live upon and with prostitutes of lowest type, the slaughter-men, though far from the poorest, are the most degraded class. The simplest and grossest forms of physical indulgence are all they ask from life. The conditions of the work have also a degrading effect on the young women who are employed in the slaughter-houses, and who, from the nature of their task, go by the horrible name of 'gut girls.' Altogether, there seems to be a quite exceptional amount of low-toned life, and the relations between the sexes are at their roughest. One cannot be surprised if members of Christian churches sooner or later leave, either for their own sakes or for the sake of their children, a district such as this.

Efforts are made to humanize the rough girls ; one missionary mentions the baskets of flowers and the costly Bibles that are given them by ladies ; but the girls, he says, think more of dress, and will spend half a guinea on a feather. Still, it is not without considerable success that the ladies working for the Deptford Fund have gathered these girls into a club. Rough though they are, they respond well, and are ready to police themselves and to exclude from the club those whose conduct falls below the adopted standard of propriety. There is social equality within the club, but it was not without some pressure that the girls whose work was with the entrails of sheep consented to associate with those who had to deal

with the still more disgusting *débris* of larger beasts. So finely are distinctions drawn. In this club music and singing take a leading place, and an effort, supported by many of the girls themselves, is made to supersede coarse songs. Instrumental music begins to be liked, although at first a violin was greeted with roars of laughter.

This club is said to be one of the best things that the 'Deptford Fund' has done. The Fund was instituted in April, 1894, as the direct result of a 'Grey Lady's' visit to Baildon Street. Some great people became interested, money was raised, and the work started, 'to help the people.' A kitchen was established for the preparation of suitable meals for the sick and convalescent, and to distribute them authorized visitors of all denominations have been appointed. This, the first and original effort of the organization, does not obtain universal approval. Some of the Churches grumble, being disappointed at their share of the distribution, and aver that the transfer of charitable subscriptions to the central fund has robbed their own institutions of support and checked their growth; from another point of view, a missionary, who is not himself one of the chosen almoners, expresses some doubt as to the good done by the 'tremendous lot of dinners given.' It is also complained in a general way that a wrong and exaggerated impression is given of the poverty and degradation of Deptford, and that this, among other ill effects, is depressing to the value of property there.

To all of this I can only say that poverty and distress certainly exist, and that the management of the Fund seems good. But I have my fears when I read in the report of 'growing needs,' and note the success that attends their appeals for money. The other operations undertaken are, however, more upon the lines of the girls' club, and call for workers rather than subscrip-

tions. 'Children's Happy Evening' entertainments are provided; and there is a school of domestic economy, where cooking, laundry work and dress-making are taught, with the idea (which, however, has come to nought) of training girls for domestic service. Rescue work was also formerly undertaken, but the work of this branch has now been amalgamated with that of another organization of the same kind. There seem to be two girls' clubs connected with the Fund, both of which meet at the Albany Institute. One of these is, while the other is not, catalogued among 'preventive agencies,' and is dealt with in the same report as the Refuge Home. So to classify any girls' club seems to me neither generous nor wise. It is greatly to be desired that these two sides of work among young women should be kept distinct.

§ 3

NEWER DEPTFORD

St. Luke's and St. Mark's are two of the parishes mentioned as having replaced the market gardens of the past, filling up acre by acre the spaces left between the railway lines. The general improvement of this area has been noted.

At St. Luke's the first holder of the living was a great preacher who filled the church, drawing no doubt from all sides. He was followed by a High Churchman, who consolidated a congregation on High Church lines; but anti-ritualistic disturbances followed, and the Trustees interfered. The present state of things—an ornate, but Evangelical service—is a compromise which, though it may not quite satisfy anyone, yet maintains a good congregation, almost all of whom are or have been parishioners. As many as five

hundred and fifty communicants are counted at Easter. Visiting, apart from magazine distribution, is done by the paid staff—two curates, two Grey Ladies, two other ladies and a nurse. The express object is intensive—to get a firm hold of those who are already attached, rather than to bring in others: 'I grieve' (said the vicar) 'more over those I lose than rejoice over new adherents.' At this church there is once a month a rather unusual kind of men's service successfully managed by a committee.

The Church of England here has the ground practically to herself. The Wesleyans and the Methodist New Connexion have each a little chapel with a handful of members and small Sunday school, and that is all. There are, however, two London City Missionaries, from whom we can learn a good deal.

The district allotted to one of these is in St. Luke's parish. He speaks of our pink streets there as being tenanted by such as engineers, victualling yardmen and police. Many occupy the whole house (six rooms), but except where elder children are at work, there are more usually two families in each house. Apart from those who drink too much, all are in comfort, and in the best parts some are buying their houses. Those whom he visits are rarely church-goers. 'They thank Cobden and Bright and everybody but God for their prosperity.' Those who can afford it buy a piano, and on Sunday evening you can hear them singing the latest music-hall ditty. But, says this impartial witness, as a rule the men are better than their talk: 'You must credit them for a great deal more religion than they confess.' In earlier days he used to speak of their sins; now he talks more of God, and leaves them to draw their own inferences—a plan, as he has learned by repeated experience, which is much less likely to fail than that of direct admonition. He finds the people specially amenable at a time of death, when the relations are

brought together; for 'London, with all its carelessness, is wonderfully tender-hearted.'

Among people such as these it is quite possible for this missionary to find a hundred who will attend a Gospel service, and for this service he has been able to form a choir of twenty-seven boys and girls. It is a success similar in kind, and fairly in proportion to that attained by the parish church. In his mission hall on Sunday afternoon a lady holds a Bible-class for young women, and in connection with it there is a mothers' meeting conducted by a lady from Blackheath, and 'helped' by the teas and excursions which her liberality provides. Nor is it difficult to bring in a crowd on occasion. When the missionary first visited the woodchoppers' berths by the Surrey Canal they demanded that he should 'pay his footing,' so he stood them a tea, followed by a service of song, and the place was crowded with men and women and girls; but they 'have not come since.'

The taking of drink is usually regarded as a matter of course or necessity, and even those who have suffered in their own homes from the ruin of their children will not give it up. The open effects of drinking are seen most on Friday and Saturday nights in Evelyn Street, or on public holidays, when this street is like a fair. But 'the teetotalers do not,' in the opinion of this missionary, 'help temperance reform by looking down on those who take alcohol—regarding total abstinence as a kind of Gospel.'

In the poorer parts the people marry very young, and are content with a low standard of life. They are far too ready to accept charity from anybody, and seem to regard church charity as coming from *people long dead*, not as coming out of the donor's pocket. They intend to go to church sometimes in return, 'but they don't do it, you know.' Blackhorse Street is recognised as the poorest and certainly is the lowest.

Many of the people there drink heavily and fight—you see women with 'black eyes.' Their standard of life is so low that they make no attempt to conceal poverty.

The other missionary, whose work lies mainly in St. Paul's parish, but on the side next St. Luke's, has a more extensive organization, including a number of workers and a brass band, open-air as well as indoor prayer meetings, and Gospel services, held on both Sunday and week-days. There is a large Sunday school, a mothers' meeting, provident, loan, and other clubs; and altogether a great deal going on. It is a young people's mission; most of the workers have been trained at it, and in it they find their life and interest. In attempting to deal with the population generally the missionary complains that the men are not sufficiently aroused to argue about religion, and 'the more faithful you are with people the more shy they are of you.' Some of them are, however, keen politicians, so much so that he finds it desirable to avoid politics. They are comfortable working-class people, and not intemperate as a whole, although they go to public-houses.

There has been a great decrease in the number of licensed houses, and it is difficult to obtain permission to open new ones, but at the same time the bar accommodation has largely increased. An elderly City missionary, who has now no hall, goes about among the public-houses, visiting them at all hours, but mostly in the morning and evening. There is not much drunkenness to be seen; and he finds that, except in the evening, the people take their drink and go off again. Neither does he see so many drunken women; but many more respectable working men's wives go in for 'their drops' than used to be the case, though some of them like to conceal the fact. The people among whom this missionary works do

not move much, and he often sees in the parents of to-day the children he knew thirty or forty years ago.

Referring to the theatre, lately opened, and the music-hall, he says they have not improved matters generally, but as to drink have made little difference. He notes, regretfully, the row of respectable working people waiting to get into the pit, and the Baptist minister in St. Paul's parish speaks also of the bad influence the theatre and music-hall exercise on the young, being largely patronized by those from fifteen to twenty years of age of decent working class, with others a shade lower. They will stand an hour at the door to secure good places. The craving for excitement, this minister says, extends to his own young people.

At St. Mark's we have a more easygoing organization than at St. Luke's ; no multiplication of services, but merely a free and open church, with bright music, which attracts a congregation. There is also a full Sunday school, but it is quite small, and everything else seems also to be on a small scale, the whole being summed up by a neighbouring missionary in the words 'not much,' but certainly good as far as it goes.

The Congregationalists have here a mission chapel, which is one of several branches of the church in Lewisham High Road. They fill the hall on Sunday evening with well-dressed comfortable members of the working class, and are discussing the question of enlargement. They have also a large Sunday school, and special work is done for deaf mutes. But the mission leans too much on the parent church, especially for financial support. Enthusiasm is lacking. For a Gospel temperance meeting, 'if there is a good musical programme, and it is well "billed,"' they can fill the hall, but not otherwise, and they do not find

that social meetings and entertainments help on spiritual work ; Deptford is looked upon as a 'hard district.' We hear again of the long lines of people waiting at theatre and music-hall, and of Sunday spent in pleasure, as also of well-kept houses in which there is little idea of saving. But, perhaps as a consequence, by way of a reaction from this view of life, we find here a remarkable mission carried on by a small body of earnest railway men. Of this mission a fuller account is given as an illustration in a later chapter.

The part of St. Paul's parish which lies west of the High Street may be classed, on the whole, with St. Mark's parish, which it adjoins, but contains some poor places, including the notorious Baildon Street, which, with Charles Street (where his hall is situated), are the special sphere of another City missionary, whose helpers, including Sunday school teachers and a large brass band, come from the Brockley Road Baptist Church. He says the inhabitants of Baildon Street change so frequently that it is useless to make an address book. Of those who attend his Gospel services, very few are from the surrounding poor streets. In Baildon Street itself a lady holds a children's meeting, and services are given in the lodging-houses, whilst the Salvation Army holds meetings there occasionally.

Baildon Street is a *cul-de-sac*, and would be greatly improved if opened up northwards into Douglas Street. It is a very rough place, containing two registered common lodging-houses, and referred to thus in our notes : 'Empty costers' barrows, ice-cream machines and knife grinders' wheels stand in the street : a few men are getting ready to go out with their stock : children, some shoeless and all ragged and dirty, are playing about, while frowsy, unkempt, half-dressed women eye you curiously, and one asks the sergeant "if he has come for *her* this time."'

§ 4

THE SOUTHERN AND WESTERN PARISHES

The portion of All Saints' parish lying north of New Cross Road, known as Hatcham Park, is peopled mainly by clerks and artisans. To the south there is a much poorer colony, consisting mostly of labourers, and in Falkener Street some squalor. Except in rare instances, the poorer parishioners, though friendly, never come to church. They are not prepared to make the effort, and find 'slacking about more congenial;' but from the other section, although late rising and Sunday bicycling are prevalent, good congregations are drawn, including a considerable proportion of men. The services are Evangelical. Owing to the cleavage in the population, most of the social agencies have to be duplicated, and we find, for instance, two mothers' meetings, two Bands of Hope, and even two libraries. There are free concerts on Saturday, and there is a very large Sunday school with some sixty teachers.

Between All Saints' and St. Mark's, but extending far into the middle-class region further south, lies the parish of St. James, Hatcham. This church, like St. Luke's, has been bandied between High and Low, without, as it seems, suffering loss of force. It was originally Evangelical, but the advowson was bought by Mrs. Tooth, who presented the living to her son, the man whose advanced practices provoked riots, and who attained to the modern martyrdom of imprisonment under the Public Worship Regulation Act. Then, after a colourless interregnum, the living was secured by the other side and placed in the hands of Evangelical trustees, who seem to have been fortunate in their choice of a succession of incumbents, through whom the parochial organization has been kept at a high pitch of efficiency.

The population in this parish to the north of

New Cross Road is wholly working class, a large proportion finding employment in connection with the railways. There may be poverty here and there, but there are now no noticeably poor streets. It is a district very similar to St. Luke's and St. Mark's; perhaps rather better. Ten years ago there were many empty houses here; now there are none. The air is fresh and pure, the streets are fairly wide, and the houses have gardens. In the worst parts there has been the greatest improvement. South of New Cross Road the people are mainly of middle and lower middle class, but the social trend is downward. The parish counts nearly twenty-five thousand inhabitants.

For the religious needs of this population there are, belonging to the Establishment, three churches, four mission buildings and five schools; served by five clergy, with four paid lay assistants and some four hundred honorary helpers of one kind or other. The churches, St. James, St. Michael, and St. George, hold respectively twelve hundred and fifty, seven hundred and fifty, and four hundred and fifty, and are said to have 'large congregations on Sunday morning' and to be 'full at night'; while to a monthly men's service at St. James's from five hundred to twelve hundred men come. Nevertheless, the vicar recognises that the bulk of his working-class parishioners remain indifferent and untouched. On Sunday morning 'they loaf about in their shirt sleeves, and in the evening buck up and go out for a walk.' 'They are not unkindly disposed —blatant atheism is dead, but scepticism is very prevalent and increasing.' It is induced, the vicar thinks, not so much by any process of intelligent thought, as by the fact that 'men's lives are not right, and that therefore they seek about for some excuse' for their conduct, and on this subject we have something very similar from a neighbouring Baptist minister, who says that the whole working class are impregnated with

free thought, not, in his view, because they believe the Bible to be untrue, but because they would like to think so.

The congregations at St. James's and St. George's are middle class. St. Michael's in Knoyle Street is the working-class church, and draws its people from its own neighbourhood. Of these there are always some found who care to come, and it would be difficult to judge from their appearance to which class they belong.

There are about two thousand children in the Sunday schools. There is also a small day school, but it is not needed, for the Board schools are satisfactory —the teachers in them being, the vicar says, quite excellent. From among these teachers are drawn many of those who serve the Sunday schools or do other parish work. There is a Band of Hope which has seven hundred members, and a lads' brigade, with cricket, football and other clubs to try and hold the boys; and, for the other sex, a branch of the Young Women's Christian Association, with from three hundred to four hundred members. Altogether it is a very active organization. 'The most popular church in the district;' 'The strongest;' 'The best of the churches;' 'Doing splendid work'—such are terms in which St. James's, Hatcham, is spoken of by its neighbours.*

In this parish the Baptists, Wesleyans, and Congregationalists are all represented. The Baptist minister, whose own church in Brockley Road is well filled with middle-class people, feels the effect of the change that is taking place in the population, and describes the new comers either as attending no place of worship, or as 'needing inducements to do so.' But, speaking of the neighbourhood generally, he says that the churches and chapels are still mostly full, and are a great force,

* The Rev. E. J. Kennedy, who was vicar at the time of our inquiry, has since left.

especially, among the former, St. James's, Hatcham, and St. Peter's, Brockley. The Baptists have two mission halls in the poor parts of Deptford. In these fair success is achieved in gathering children together, and a few women are attracted, but, as usual, there is complete failure as to men. 'Those who are really touched you may count on the fingers of your hand.' It is, indeed, to be feared that the people connected with the mission organization come in the main for what they can get. 'They require to be helped, and will take all you can give them.' All the adherents are assisted in some way in the course of the year, and, as has been said, even so, few come from the poor streets that surround the missions. It is remarked, and the remark is one often made, that people do not care to attend a mission hall at their own doors, but prefer to go further afield; which seems to show that there is some sense of shame connected with going to the mission, or that they dread the scoffing of their neighbours.

The Wesleyan Church in New Cross Road, which is also affected adversely by social changes, draws to some extent from the working-class district to the north, but the congregation is mainly middle class, and provides, by its society classes and a Wesley Guild, for the 'Christian fellowship and spiritual edification' of its members, and especially the younger ones. The Sunday school is the only agency by which they touch the class below, except that there is a Dorcas Society which makes garments and provides 'maternity bags' for distribution amongst the poor. They question the utility, from a religious point of view, of mothers' meetings and slate clubs.

Ludwick Hall, Clifton Hill, is another branch of the Lewisham High Road Congregational Church. The principal work is a Sunday school, with a children's morning service, and Bible-classes in the afternoon;

but an attempt to meet the supposed tastes of the working classes is made by way of 'Pleasant Sunday Evening Services' and 'Pleasant Tuesday Evenings,' and by the music of a brass band. There is also a so-called 'Cottage Meeting' on Wednesday afternoons. This last is now held in the hall, and is in effect a prayer meeting, when a blessing is invoked on all the work. Except on Tuesdays, when a good magic-lantern exhibition or the cinematograph may 'fill the hall to its utmost capacity,' the numbers attracted seem to be extremely small.

The parent church of this, and of the Congregational Mission in St. Mark's parish already described, is itself situated in the adjoining parish of St. John, and, being quite full, seeks to extend its sphere in these ways. Of its well-to-do congregation, many come from considerable distances. It has one thousand and forty-two members, and may perhaps be accounted the most influential church in what is described as a well-ordered district of church-goers. In addition to the efforts on behalf of the poorer classes, and partly in connection with them, the young people are organized in junior and senior societies of Christian Endeavour, and their elders as a 'Christian Aid Society,' with a Bible woman nurse, whose work, and that of the ladies who assist her ('always ready to speak a word for the Lord Jesus to her patients'), is referred to rather unctuously in one of the minor reports.

I do not doubt that this work, though probably rather futile on its religious side, and described in what is to me very trying language, is the outcome of a genuine Christian endeavour. But one turns with a sense of relief to read of the proceedings of the Church Literary Society to which the young people also belong, with its lawn tennis and camera clubs, and an extremely attractive course of lectures taking place every week

from October to March, and to note how the lecture on Charles Dickens resulted in a summer excursion of a party of sixty to Rochester and the Dickens' country.

Of the work of the Church of England in St. John's parish I am without direct information. It is Evangelical, and 'well spoken of' by the surrounding Nonconformists. The parish is much of it poor, being in this respect an extension southward of Christ Church and St. Paul's. In it the Strict Baptists have a 'Zion,' which has a membership of two hundred and thirty-nine, and a Sunday school with three hundred and eighty scholars and thirty-two teachers. The report also says:—"Unity abides in our midst. The services are fairly well attended. All our institutions are well sustained. The spirit of prayer is mightily manifested, and we are looking forward to showers of blessings." The members of this congregation do not come from the immediate neighbourhood, though the Sunday school children do. So, too, the Methodists at Brunswick Chapel come mainly from the streets to the south. They are comfortable, working-class people, less numerous and socially a grade below the Baptists, but hardly less respectable. They relieve their own poor from the Sacramental Fund, but among their members there is seldom need for relief. 'In nine cases out of ten,' we are told by their pastor, 'poverty is self-inflicted.' 'It is the man who is not religious and who drinks' that wants relief. The spiritual work of this sect, like that of the Zion Baptists, lies mainly among its own members, but the minister, in his interview with us, emphasized the changed attitude of the Nonconformist Churches towards the poor: they now recognise their responsibility, and are becoming desperately in earnest in trying to bring those outside into the Church. And this is not entirely without response, his own experience

being that, in his visits among the outside people, he finds in the very poorest homes times when religious conversation is liked.

We have seen how this spirit moves amongst the Baptists and Congregationalists, and we find it also in a marked degree with the Presbyterians of Brockley Road, whose church is in St. Peter's parish, Brockley, but whose religious and philanthropic energies extend throughout Deptford. Some ten or twelve years ago they established the 'People's Hall,' on the Broadway. Great were the anticipations and great the enthusiasm recorded in the account of their first year's work. To this report, entitled "One Year's work in Outcast London," they still turn back. Efforts are made to maintain a sense of the importance of what is done, and stirring paragraphs appear in the annual Church report, but the high level of past zeal cannot be sustained. The work at this hall is an admixture of philanthropy and the Gospel enlivened by concerts. It is claimed that at the Gospel service held at 8 o'clock on Sunday evening, they reach the poorest class, 'especially on the nights when the lime-light is used.' The attendance is best at the Saturday evening concerts. Those who come to the hall are visited. During the winter much help was given in food, fire, clothing and otherwise, 'always in connection with religious services.' All this work is managed by the 'Christian Association' which embodies the working members of the Church, but it may be feared that the distribution by them of temporary relief, in the shape of soup, bread, grocery and coals, does far more harm than good.

The church which throws off all this religious and philanthropic energy, spreading its charities widely through Deptford, is itself very prosperous. It has accommodation for a thousand, and is well filled; it has Sunday schools, the children in which are largely

those of the congregation, and Bible-classes for those a little older; it has, too, a special students' class, and a choral society. The Christian Association already referred to in connection with the People's Hall, counting two hundred members, consists of young men and young women and includes a literary section. The 'lawn-tennis club,' we read in the report, had a fairly good season and supplied 'healthy recreation with Christian society,' while at the ladies' section of the gymnasium, 'very creditable progress was made in athletics.' Every young man and woman of the church is urged to join 'one or other of these valuable societies and thereby do good to themselves and others, and thus hasten the coming of Christ's Kingdom.' So, too, the elder ladies have a working association, which, the report says, by making garments for the poor, 'ministered comfort and joy to many needy homes and grateful hearts;' and all is told in the simple language of a simple faith unable to recognise how inadequate are the forces which it wields and how exaggerated is its pretension to deal with the needs of other classes and the deep-lying troubles of life.

The Wesleyans, who have churches in Harefield Road, in St. Peter's parish, and in Kitto Road, in St. Catherine's, find this a good neighbourhood. These churches are not full and never have been, but they were built in advance of the population and both congregations are growing. Those who come to the new streets are more inclined to Wesleyanism than the old residents who are leaving or have left. All classes are touched, but the Wesleyans find their adherents especially among commercial men and clerks. At Harefield Road an attempt has been made to deal with the poor by means of two small mission rooms and outdoor services, and there are Sunday schools with four hundred children drawn from the poorer classes.

St. Catherine's Church, magnificently placed on the top of Telegraph Hill in a well-to-do district, has no difficulties, financial or numerical. It is always well filled, and there were about four hundred communicants at Easter.

The parish of St. Peter, Brockley, like St. Catherine's, is very well-to-do, and includes no poor streets. The church has no endowment. It was built and is maintained by the residents, who thus have a sense of proprietorship, and the vicar's position comes to be not very different from that of a Nonconformist minister. His people are mostly salaried business men, not many of them employers now, 'but many will be.' They are successful people, and very independent in tone. In such a parish district visiting would be out of place, and the ordinary Sunday school is uncalled for, but there is a well attended Sunday afternoon service for children. This church runs no mission of its own, but assists with money some of the poorer parishes, and finds an outlet for personal energy in helping the Deptford Ragged School in Giffin Street. The vicar is a very remarkable man, with a gift of forcible speech, full of trenchant humour, and though another appointment had been hoped for has made himself liked. He is a very successful preacher and fills his church both morning and evening. 'We have no late dinners,' he explained, with an ejaculation of thankfulness. A great many men come to hear him, and carping critics say that they do so seeking entertainment. They undoubtedly get it. But withal, it is plain, practical, powerful preaching, and of such sort that no one tires of it.

There is a noticeably friendly feeling amongst all the denominations in this neighbourhood. If they compete it is without bitterness or recrimination. There is a code of honour as to 'sheep stealing,' and wanderers are often passed back. In some cases the

vicars of the Established Churches have joined with Nonconformists in United Prayer Meetings.

The great development of religious work in Deptford is spoken of by an old London City missionary who has worked here for nearly half a century. It is a development that has accompanied an enormous increase in the population and may even hardly have kept pace with it. But of the Church of England clergy there were, when he first came, only four where now there are twenty-four, and it is the same with the Nonconformists, who have also multiplied their places of worship, while the London City missionaries have increased from six to ten. The population, according to this witness, does not respond very well, and he even says that, except St. James's, none of the Churches are now doing so well as a few years ago. In so far as this is true there can be no doubt that it is due to the great influx of the working classes among whom indifference to spiritual work is so widely spread. 'Their interests are in racing and betting; all the public-houses take the sporting papers and you see the men poring over the racing lists.'

§ 5

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

The old Greenwich Board of Works was a combination of three vestries—viz., St. Nicholas and St. Paul, Deptford, and St. Alfege, Greenwich; but for all practical purposes the representatives of each vestry conducted their own affairs, and merely met to confirm and register what each had decided for themselves. The new Borough of Greenwich was so arranged as to

include the old parish of St. Nicholas, Deptford, while the Borough of Deptford has been left with the remainder.

At the time our inquiry was made the Board of Works was still in power, and the remarks that follow bear upon the district which we have accepted as being properly Deptford. In this area there is unfortunately a complete class division as between north and south, the line of separation being the New Cross Road. The representatives from the south side, the Brockley people, are described by the Presbyterian minister as 'hard,' 'keeping down the rates being the key-note of their action;' while one of the Baptists, who himself sat on the vestry for some time, spoke of the Radical contingent from the other side as being formerly very strong, 'with a wild Socialistic element,' bringing about excited party feeling and 'scenes.' The resultant of these opposing forces seems, however, to have been not amiss: 'vestry good;' 'works very well;' 'well managed;' 'parish work done pretty well;' 'the labours of the local authorities have had a beneficial effect'—such are the views expressed by leading representatives of the Church of England, Wesleyans, Baptists and Congregationalists, and we have heard no dissentient voice.

The reports on the conditions of housing and on sanitation naturally vary with the district referred to. The rector of St. Paul's speaks of the great difficulty of the task, and the vicar of Christ Church, while complaining of deterioration, enveighs against the system of 'farming' which has been introduced into house-owning and management. Another witness tells of several houses in Giffin Street condemned, but botched up again so as to pass, and asserts that half the houses in these streets ought to be demolished. He, too, refers to the system of 'farming,' the houses being taken by speculators who let them out in rooms

and collect their rents on Sunday mornings. And yet another deponent, speaking of St. Paul's parish, says that housing could not well be worse ; and it is urged that the want of proper housing conduces to indulgence in drink.

West of the High Street, however, the reports are all favourable, as : 'Good,' 'good throughout,' 'generally good,' 'not much to complain of,' 'houses well kept and clean.' But the rents are high, and still rising, and the demand for dwellings so keen that people do not move if they can avoid it. 'It is almost impossible to find accommodation,' says one, and there is certainly some overcrowding of a respectable character very difficult to deal with, when, for instance, in a house divided to accommodate two families, lodgers are taken by one or both in order to lighten the load of rent. In the poor parts rents do not seem to have risen, the reason assigned being that the houses are so old and bad. The Mill Lane demolitions have, undoubtedly, increased crowding, and stringent regulations enforced in one part tend, at any rate temporarily, to aggravate the evil elsewhere. It is claimed by one witness that hardly a family in Giffin Street or Regent Street has more than one room. 'Much overcrowding ; a great deal of single-room life,' is the report of another, who, at the same time, refers, as do the others, to the prevalence of the objectionable apartment system of the house-farmers.

Health appears to be satisfactory. 'Fairly good,' 'good,' 'generally very good,' 'exceedingly good,' 'on the whole surprisingly good,' 'excellent, fever epidemics unknown,' are among the opinions expressed. These reports apply to both poor and rich, and to all parts of the district, but distinctions are drawn between the higher and lower ground. One witness cautiously states that the district is 'fairly healthy,' 'particularly where it lies high;' and the vicar of St. James's,

speaking of his own parish, says that health is good in the southern part, which is on the hill, but that in the low-lying working-class quarter pulmonary diseases and cancer are rife.

The streets and roads seem well kept and well lighted, and a good deal has been accomplished in the securing of open spaces, an enumeration of which will be found in the notes on the map (p. 77).

Altogether the local authority set a good example, which it is to be hoped the new Borough Council will follow and carry further.

CHAPTER II

GREENWICH

§ 1

Those of my readers who have never visited Greenwich will see, if they refer to the map, that the Hospital and Park, with Blackheath in the rear, separate East from West Greenwich hardly less completely than Deptford Creek and the Ravensbourne valley divide West Greenwich from Deptford. Except for the footpaths across the park, Romney Road, which passes betwixt the Hospital and the Naval School, is the sole connecting link.

So much the map can give, but of the singular charm of this breach in the continuity of London the map tells nothing; neither of the formal beauty of the buildings, nor of the steep slopes of the park ennobled by great trees, culminating in the strange outline of the notable building from which are watched the movements of the stars to measure time and guide the whole world's mariners. Blackheath also has its charm of breezy openness and the feeling of having done with streets and of London left behind; but of this the map speaks clearly enough where the diverging roads branch out upon the heath at the corner of the park.

It is not, however, these aspects of the locality that must now engage our attention, but the lives of the

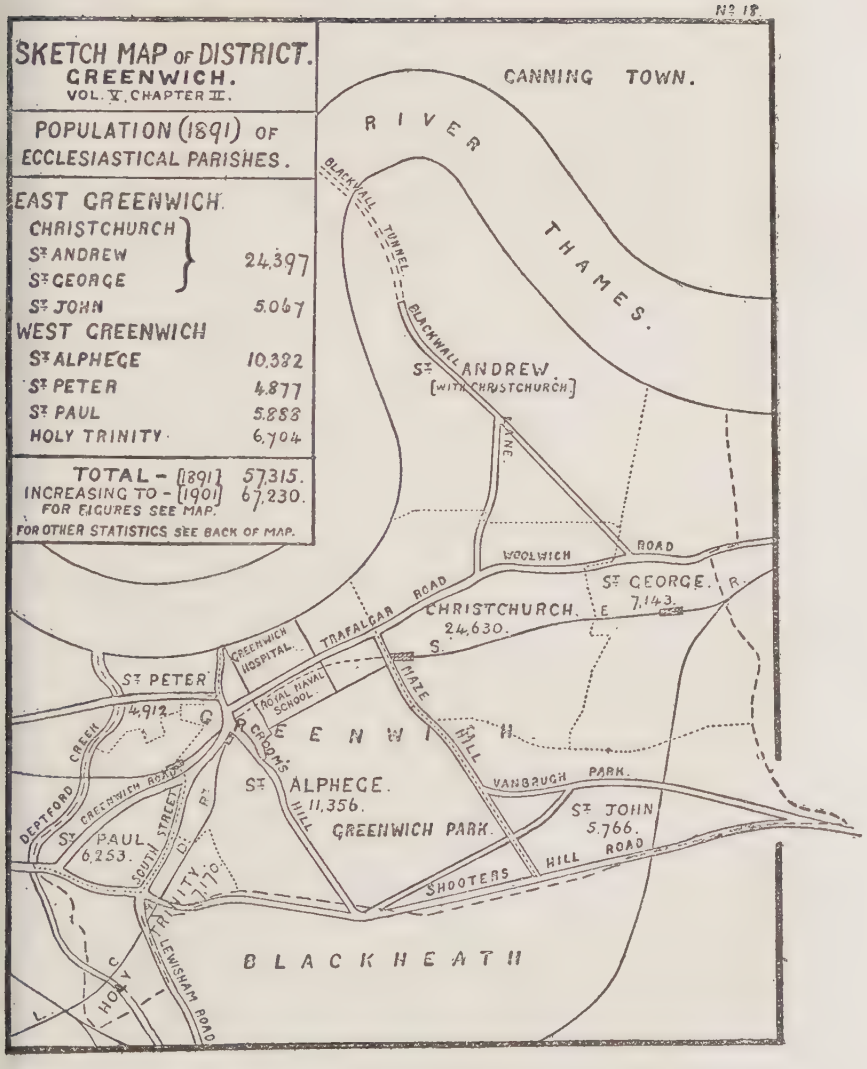
population, old and new, poor and rich, that have gathered in and around the royal borough of Greenwich. In describing them I shall begin on the west side of the park with the poor who live there and trace the population southward to Blackheath Hill; and I shall then follow the same course on the other side of the park, where a quite new element is encountered in the population which is finding its way in from the North, through the roadway tunnelled under the Thames from Blackwall.

§ 2

THE POOR PART OF WEST GREENWICH

St. Peter's parish, hemmed in between river, railway, creek and hospital, is peculiarly isolated and entirely poor. Even the fringe of red which fronts the hospital belongs to St. Alfege. The vicar says his parish is unique, and mentions, as supporting this claim, that it has the greatest density of population and the largest proportion of males to females; that all its inhabitants are poor; and that it contains neither chapel nor Board school.

There is, indeed, a Board school just beyond the parish boundary, which draws its children from his population, but there is in the whole area, including scraps of St. Alfege's and St. Paul's, no chapel to share or dispute with him the spiritual care of these certainly extremely poor and very crowded people. Only a City missionary visits some of his streets and holds meetings in a small hall, which (like the school) is just beyond his boundary. Within the parish there is, it is true, an undenominational Sunday school, which was once a ragged school, and combined with


SKETCH MAP OF DISTRICT.
GREENWICH.
VOL. V. CHAPTER III.
POPULATION (1891) OF ECCLESIASTICAL PARISHES.
EAST GREENWICH.
CHRISTCHURCH
St ANDREW
St GEORGE
24,397
St JOHN 5.067
WEST GREENWICH
St ALPHEGE 10,382
St PETER 4,877
St PAUL 5,883
HOLY TRINITY 6,704
TOTAL - [1891] 57,315.
INCREASING TO - [1901] 67,230.
FOR FIGURES SEE MAP.
FOR OTHER STATISTICS SEE BACK OF MAP.
CANNING TOWN.
RIVER THAMES.
BLACKWALL TUNNEL
BLACKWALL
St ANDREW [WITH CHRISTCHURCH]
WOOLWICH ROAD
St GEORGE. 7,143.
CHRISTCHURCH. 24,630.
TRAFALGAR ROAD
GREENWICH HOSPITAL
ROYAL NAVAL SCHOOL
MAZE
St PETER 4,912.
CREEK
DEPTFORD
St PAUL 6,253.
GREENWICH ROAD
SOUTH STREET
CROOM'S HILL
GREENWICH
HILL
St ALPHEGE. 11,356.
GREENWICH PARK.
VANBRUGH PARK.
St JOHN 5,766.
HILL ROAD
SHOOTERS
TRINITY 1,170.
HOLY
LEWISHAM ROAD
BLACKHEATH

STATISTICS *bearing on the* AREA INCLUDED IN SKETCH MAP NO. 18. *Described in Chapter II. (Part I., Vol. V.).*

CENSUS STATISTICS.

Showing Increase or Decrease of Population.

Population in				Increase per Cent.	
1881.	1891.	1896.	1901.	1881-1891.	1891-1901.
46,580	57,240	60,779	67,315	22·9 %	17.1 %

Density of Population.	
1891.	1901.
Persons per Acre.	
32·9	38·5
Inhabited Houses.	
8,987	10,200
Persons per House.	
6·4	6·6
Number of Acres.	
1,740	

Age and Sex in 1891.

Age.	Males.	Females.	Together
Under 5 years	3,622	3,466	7,088
— 15 ,,	7,165	6,539	13,704
— 20 ,,	2,572	2,639	5,211
— 25 ,,	2,315	2,781	5,096
— 35 ,,	4,044	4,593	8,637
— 45 ,,	3,097	3,410	6,507
— 55 ,,	2,310	2,514	4,824
— 65 ,,	1,466	1,639	3,105
65 and over	1,352	1,716	3,068
Totals ...	27,943	29,297	57,240

NOTE.—The area included in the Sketch Map comprises the Registration Sub-districts of East and West Greenwich and the statistics here given refer to these areas. Alterations have been made in the boundaries of the area by the London Government Act (1899), but they do not materially affect the figures. For details of the Special Family Enumeration, see Appendix.

SPECIAL ENUMERATION FOR THIS INQUIRY (1891).

Sex, Birthplace and Industrial Status of Heads of Families.

Sex.		Birthplace.		Industrial Status.			Total Heads.
Male.	Female.	In London.	Out of London.	Employers	Employees	Neither.	
9,892 82 %	2,232 18 %	5,771 48 %	6,353 52 %	984 8 %	8,282 68 %	2,858 24 %	12,124 100 %

Constitution of Families.

Heads.	Others Occupied.	Unoccupied.	Servants.	Total in Families.
12,124 (1·0)	9,084 (·75)	30,054 (2·48)	2,182 (·18)	53,444 (4·41)

Social Classification according to *Rooms Occupied* or *Servants Kept*.

	Persons.	Per Cent.	
4 or more persons to a room	693	1·2	Crowded 17·2 %
3 & under 4 ,, ,,	1,553	2·7	
2 & ,, 3 ,, ,,	7,597	13·3	
1 & ,, 2 ,, ,,	13,681	23·9	Not Crowded 82·8 %
Less than 1 person to a room	2,920	5·1	
Occupying more than 4 rooms	18,636	32·6	
4 or more persons to 1 servant	2,709	4·7	
Less than 4 persons to 1 servant & 4 to 7 persons to 2 servants	2,125	3·7	
All others with 2 or more servants	1,348	2·4	
Servants in families	2,182	3·8	
Inmates of Institutions (including servants)	3,796	6·6	
Total	57,240	100	
Living in Poverty (as estimated in 1889)		36·4 %	100 %
,, in Comfort (,, ,,)		63·6 %	

it a Working Lads' Institute. With these exceptions the church stands quite alone.

If there are other areas in London equally crowded and poor, there are, at least, none that are much more so. The poverty, however, though so general, is not anywhere here so degraded as in parts of Deptford, and the vicar, who has been connected with the parish thirty years, can trace some improvement in the condition of the people consequent on the forcing out of the poorest by the forbidding of overcrowding and the closing of cellar dwellings. Meanwhile, his work has suffered by the deterioration of the wealthy neighbouring districts upon which it depended for help, and the Church thus in a measure shares the isolation and poverty of the people.

It is chiefly through the young that the Church comes into contact with the parishioners. In its day schools nearly six hundred children are taught, and an equal number belong to the Sunday schools. The people are also visited in their homes, but will not come to the church, which is empty both morning and evening. 'Completely friendly, but utterly apathetic,' we are once more told, is the attitude of the population. The services are Evangelical and old fashioned.

Apart from the schools the greatest measure of success attends the temperance work. The response comes as usual most readily from the young, of whom, it is said, that in twenty-three years five thousand have passed through the Band of Hope, five hundred being the present membership. Of the senior society it is stated that throughout all these years it has maintained a weekly meeting.

The Ragged School and Institute which I have mentioned, has three hundred and forty-eight names on its Sunday school register, and an average attendance of two hundred and twenty-eight, and this is made a basis for other work, chiefly among children,

such as magic-lantern services, from which 'much blessing' is hoped for. The Lads' Institute has seventy members, but does not seem to be working very successfully, as, although the officers are said to find "cause for praise," we read also in the report that their patience "has been sorely tested by the roughness of the lads." The pious discipline of this establishment demands rather much. The reading of a portion of Scripture and prayer is fixed for 9.15 at night, and all the boys are expected to attend; terms upon which, in these days, the happiness of not a few private families would be surely wrecked if the parents were old fashioned enough or stern enough to enforce them. There are cricket and football clubs, gymnastic and swimming classes, and other attractions for the boys, but the effort seems to flag somewhat. Perhaps the special attempts made to carry on this institution to what the more pious subscribers account as 'God's glory' are not very happily conceived.

The City missionary, a gentle, pious, white-haired old man, who here visits from house to house, fills his hall on Sunday nights with women, and some of them come also on Thursdays. We hear of no other religious work in this district, but it is very probable that emissaries come to it from some of the Nonconformist churches to the south.

The master and mistress of the neighbouring Board school not unnaturally regard the schools as a greater influence than any other, whether social or religious, and they agreed in naming 'self-respect' as the most important lesson the children learnt. The parents, none of whom are hostile, are nearly all labourers or riverside workers, with a few railway men, and artisans employed at the gas works. The children, it is said, both boys and girls, choose their school to some extent, and the better off are apt to pass this one by, and may even go as far as Royal Hill or Blackheath Road to find

what they like. The same liberty of choice leads also to truancy, for which park, creek and river offer at once facilities and temptation, especially in summer. Of such truancy there is still a good deal; but there used to be much more in old days when the parents rather encouraged these irregularities. No child stays on at school after fourteen, very few beyond thirteen, and here, as elsewhere, many, while still at school, begin to earn money out of school hours, some as newspaper boys, or as assistants in barbers' or pawnbrokers' shops, managing on Saturday and Sunday, or by working early and late, to put in many hours' employment. An attempt to arrange football matches on Saturday broke down because industrial work interfered, and the club was given up. Girls, when there are several in the family, take turns to stay at home, but otherwise are much more regular than the boys, and more docile. They like coming to school, and never play truant, but are said to be less truthful than the boys. Both are honest, and the school never has to pay for stolen things. The Penny Bank, with nearly five hundred depositors, is very successful. The money deposited is drawn out to spend during treats, or on purchases of clothes, as is commonly the case in most schools in poor neighbourhoods.

The following extracts from notes made during our survey of the streets may help to supplement the outlines of the picture I have been able to give. In its general characteristics the district is described as resembling many country towns, 'with a few leading streets and little alleys tucked in between;' there are 'winding alleys and little courts,' and the houses are 'nearly all old, some dating from the eighteenth century.' Occasionally the gardens in the main street 'give glimpses of scarlet beans and sunflowers;' but the smaller houses are apt to be 'set down anywhere, often built back to back.'

Quoting further, and now coming to more detailed descriptions, we read: '*Haddo Street:* two or three families per house, costers, and dockers, or creek men. Some just coming home very grimy to dinner. Some of the houses with well-kept windows. *Blucher Buildings:* two entries, one on each side of beer-house; the houses of two storeys back to back; north side still very rough (say the police), south side better. *Roan Street:* Skinner's Buildings, ten houses of two rooms each, with small garden in front, rent 4*s* 6*d* a week; "quite enough for these little hovels," said a woman who lived there. *Roan Place:* two rooms and scullery, windows broken and stopped with paper. *St. James's Place:* narrow entry, three-storey houses, consisting of three rooms one above the other, long gardens in front, with washhouse, &c., one of the gardens well kept. Those who dwell here are bricklayers' labourers, &c. Women do washing and partly support the men. All are very poor. Another row of houses back on to these, fronting the other way, with small gardens.'

In many cases these houses have good back gardens, but here and there a cottage has been wedged in. *Wood Wharf* by the river side is 'as poor as you like;' the houses old, dull and dirty; and in *Coltman Place* and *Coltman Buildings* we have again, back to back, two storey two-roomed houses, with closet in front. In the door of the closet a swing had been arranged and on it were swinging by turns a lot of dirty children. Near Coltman St. is the 'Sun' public-house; women were standing in the bar, and a baby crawling on the floor. In *Fawn Buildings*, built on the ground at the rear of a public-house in Bridge Street, the backway to the public-house passes through the property, and in this passage was a foul open urinal; near which dirty children were playing about while their mothers swore at them. In another little place consisting of some more

two-roomed cottages set back to back, with washhouses in front, women were washing and singing, surrounded by ragged dirty children, one being still in its night-dress. A little girl of about three on being told to go with her sister to get beer, refused the escort, and went alone; and presently returned with a pint of porter in a can. *Richardson Place* has eleven two-storeyed two-roomed houses, with washhouse and three or four closets for common use near the entrance; everything filthy; 'rent 4*s* 6*d*, and must pay extra for a key of the w.c.' Here live navvies and gas-stokers. 'Some girls of about twelve are playing "school". It is a singing lesson that they affect—negro songs, sung with fresh young voices—this the only bright thing about the place.' In *Thames Street* we again meet with grimy men returning to their homes for dinner at 1 o'clock.

Bad as it is, there are many worse places in London.

The school master and mistress already mentioned referred to drink as the curse of the people, and the vicar of St. Paul's (in whose parish the school actually stands) spoke of the horror of the drinking carried on in these poor streets, and of sights to be seen such as made it almost impossible for ladies to go there at holiday times; though still nothing like so bad as it was before the abolition of Greenwich Fair.

All agree that the conditions are improving, and such expressions as 'used to be rough, better now,' 'used to be rough, but the roughest people have left,' recur frequently in our police notes. And there is agreement, too, as to the immediate cause for this improvement. More than anything else it is due to that well recognised London difficulty, pressure upon house room—an evil working here to good, for the pressure has been created mainly by legislation against overcrowding and cellar dwellings, which has partly compelled, and partly assisted, landlords to get

rid of undesirable tenants; while in some cases, perhaps, a former rough character may, under pressure of law and landlord combined, have settled down into a decent working man.

Beyond this material influence there is that of education, 'softening manners and mitigating ferocity,' as the old Latin Grammars claimed; but religion in any highly developed form takes no present place; and it is impossible not to feel that amongst these poor West Greenwich people, whether for them or by them, something more might be done; and difficult to escape the conclusion that such religious agencies as are at work fail even to an unusual degree to penetrate their lives.

§ 3

THE REMAINDER OF WEST GREENWICH

It must be admitted that there is nothing very attractive about the services at St. Peter's Church, and on that account alone it is not surprising that so few attend, although quite large congregations are found at St. Alfege's, hard by. The method of approach at the two churches is different, and it is probable that, of the few of St. Peter's parishioners who care to attend at all, some may prefer the services at the mother parish church. But, after all, the contrast, as regards attendance, is to be explained mainly, not by differences in the character of the services, but by difference in class of the surrounding population, clearly enough indicated by the colours on the map. In St. Peter's all are poor, whereas the vicar of St. Alfege* has described his own people as

* Mr. Brooke Lambert, a very liberal-minded and courageous man, whose death has happened since the time of our inquiry at Greenwich (May, 1900).

one-third gentry and shopkeepers, one-third artisans, and only one-third poor. The distribution of the classes changes gradually. There is a downward tendency amongst the better-off. The more wealthy leave. There used to be some very poor courts to the west of the park, but these have been demolished and their inhabitants scattered, and now the poor of this parish are to be found mainly in East Greenwich. For them special mission services are provided, which, it is frankly admitted, hardly any of them attend. St. Mary's, by the park, which is linked with St. Alfege, was formerly the fashionable church in this parish, but is now neglected. The two churches stand almost within a stone's throw of each other, and those who worshipped at St. Mary's have either left Greenwich or transferred their allegiance. The large congregation is now at St. Alfege. Here is offered a good parochial service and the broadest of Broad Church doctrine, and from these things male Londoners do not hold aloof.

The vicar made no secret of his sense of the superior claims of social as compared to religious work; and it is rather remarkable that he assumed, without hesitation, the position which was suggested by stress of failure in St. Peter's parish. 'My belief,' he said, 'is that you must get honest and good ground before you can hope the seed will grow: that will come in good time.' And, meanwhile, his efforts were 'directly social, and only indirectly religious.' The social efforts made here have assumed successively various forms. Clubs on a large scale, once believed in, have been abandoned, the difficulties having proved too great, and now it is from the provident agencies that most is expected. The object aimed at in every case is knowledge of the people, and the mutual benefit that arises from intercourse kept clear of hypocrisy or cadging. The old 'ticket' system of relief, and the providing of

coals and blankets in winter, have been entirely stopped. As a neighbouring vicar put it, 'He makes the people pay for their own relief,' that is, the visitors collect instead of give. The Provident Dispensary has three thousand members, who, of course, are not all of this parish. But it must not be supposed that there is no giving. On the contrary, the sums expended each year in charity are large, as is almost invariably the case when strict principles of administration are adopted in a parish where the poor are numerous; for the assistance that is given is adequate, and necessarily costly. The result of the adoption of this policy, carried out with the co-operation of the much-abused Charity Organization Society, is reported to have been to win respect for the Church, and to earn dislike 'only from those by whom it is an honour to be disliked.' This work lies mainly among the poor to the east of the park, and will be further described in its place.

The beauty of the western side of Greenwich Park, and the steep declivities in which Blackheath terminates, is quite remarkable. The view down Hyde Vale or from 'The Point,' with all London spread out before the eye, and St. Paul's, distant five or six miles, standing up in the midst, is to my mind the most striking panorama that London affords. At this favoured spot, on Croome's Hill, stands an Ursuline Convent and the Catholic Church of Our Lady 'Star of the Sea.' The church is a beautiful edifice, partly old, on the completion and adornment of which much has been spent; suggesting a command of money which, Canon O'Halloran says, is misleading, the funds having come from the wealth of an individual priest, who is not now living. In addition to the church, there are schools managed by the Sisters, but they are not for the poor. They consist of a boarding school with

eighty scholars, and a day school for middle-class girls. The Catholic population in the district is small and scattered, and the church mainly used by the comparatively well-to-do. The congregation includes many of 'convert blood.'

The priests visit the training-ship *Dreadnought*, where there are usually forty or fifty Catholic boys who come under their care. This represents a large part of their work.

The poorest section of Roman Catholics dwell near the river in St. Peter's parish, and are more likely to attend Mass at a church on a lower level, actually as well as socially, in Deptford or East Greenwich, than to climb the hill which leads to the rich man's church. The few of them who attend here are probably often beggars or cadging Catholics attracted from the poor parishes which lie east and west. They drift into the district for a time, pick up what they can, and disappear again.

The 'Brethren' have one of their largest halls in King George Street. In reply to an inquiry they tell us that they very much prefer to say nothing about the work, as 'no true account can be given till we are before the Judgment Seat of Christ'—an attitude which commands respect, and one from which the members of this remarkable religious body always regard their inner spiritual work. Beside a mission room near by there is another of their churches to which I shall refer when I come to East Greenwich.

The only other religious centre in the western portion of the parish of St. Alfege is the Wesleyan church in London Street. It is not at present very successful. Its minister speaks of the district as 'overdone with religious effort.' There is, he says, 'too much competition for the moral health of the people,' an opinion which evidently refers to the district to the south of his church, where, in St.

Paul's parish, almost every Nonconformist body has its fling. The Wesleyan cause has suffered here, as in so many places, from the outward drift of the well-to-do, and the work is now conducted on 'mission lines,' with two Sisters and a very fervent inner band of some seventy young people. Its hopes rest on the results of outdoor services. There is, the minister thinks, a demand for religion, but, unfortunately it is coupled with an invincible objection to entering a church; with the local Theatre and a brass band he believes he could draw crowds. In saying this he no doubt had in mind the neglected population which lies to the north, towards which the visitations of the Sisters are chiefly directed. There is a temperance meeting at this church, a great attempt being made to attract the actual sots; and there is a Sunday school with three hundred and sixty-four scholars on the roll.

Of the competitors to the south, by far the most important is the Baptist church, presided over by one of the great Spurgeon's twin sons; of whom the other now occupies his father's pulpit. This church was established twenty-one years ago, and Mr. Charles Spurgeon, then quite a young man, became its first pastor. It has had a career of unbroken success. Changes in the surrounding population have, however, involved changes in the congregation, and in the methods adopted. The better class streets have deteriorated; shops have changed character and changed hands. As tested by the collection plate the total amount received is kept up, and it was noted with pride that this was so even during a prolonged absence of the pastor owing to ill-health, but a piece of gold or even a half-crown is now seldom seen, and 'they would know who gave it.' The numbers, also, both of congregation and membership, are well maintained, though the proportion 'passing through' is great. In 1899, on a membership of six hundred and seventy,

there were one hundred and three added against one hundred lost. A large number come from a distance. Not many *families* are lost by removal, though individuals come and go. There is much movement among the young people, who form the larger proportion of the congregation, and who go off to situations, or marry and leave the neighbourhood. That this successful church draws from the other less thriving Nonconformist bodies can hardly be doubted. While it prospers, Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Wesleyans are all, more or less, failing. They maintain a somewhat struggling existence; and as the Baptists under Mr. Spurgeon are never very ready to co-operate, some bitterness of feeling can scarcely be avoided.

Mr. Spurgeon's Church is a genuine religious force. In addition to the morning and evening services, when the chapel is full, the pastor holds a Bible-class on Sunday afternoon for young men (shop-assistants, clerks, &c.), attended by from two hundred to two hundred and fifty. The young women also meet in large numbers on Sunday afternoon for their Bible-classes, for 'when you get the young men, you are sure to have the young women too.' The firm grip obtained on all the younger generation is most important. The Sunday school is very large; there are more than nine hundred on the books, and of these half are over fifteen. The Church prides itself with reason on retaining the elder scholars, and it may be assumed that the children in the Sunday school are in part at least those belonging to the families of members, a great source of strength. Excepting in the way of minor charities, Christmas dinners, &c., the poor are not directly touched by the work here. There are no 'missions' connected with it. Mr. Spurgeon regards the multiplication of small missions as an evil, and mentioned as one objection to them,

the swollen self-importance they induced amongst precocious young people. He considers training necessary for work of this kind, and has a 'preachers' class' expressly for young men qualifying to take mission-hall services. Those thus trained are kept occupied as local preachers, and hold open-air meetings in the neighbourhood.

The Young Men's Bible-class is a centre of great activity. Football, cricket and bicycle clubs, a benefit society and book fund, as well as the 'Gospel Mission Band,' all take their rise from it.

The Strict Baptists have a little church close by, which, as usual, goes on its quiet way, neither interfering with others nor being interfered with by them. Its members are comfortable business and working people, many of whom come from a distance.

The vicar of St. Paul's, who has been in his present position for twenty-two years, speaking of the difficulties he has had to contend with, referred to 'all the chapels of Greenwich' as being in his parish. It is rather a straggling district with which he has to deal, but has a population of six thousand only. The parish stretches, as we have mentioned, beyond the railway into the area included with our description of St. Peter's, where it has a small Sunday school and a mission hall, in which a handful of people gather together for service on Sunday evening. South of the railway line, the parishioners are for the most part artisans, clerks and small tradesmen. There was formerly a rich class, but they have mostly gone, and in place of one family occupying a house, there are now generally two or more. The morning congregation at St. Paul's used to be the larger of the two; now it is in the evening that the greatest numbers come. The congregations are parochial, not drawn from outside, as is the case to a considerable extent with all the Nonconformists, and the numbers, though far from great, compare favourably

with all except the Baptists. The growing indifference of the people on matters of religion, and the consequent slackness, extend, we are told, to those who are church-goers. They 'take their religion lightly,' and are much inclined to believe that it 'will all come right in the end.' The change that has come shows itself in various ways. Twenty years ago the vicar was often called upon in the night to give consolation to the sick and dying; now this never happens. Then no week passed without letters whether of praise, inquiry or abuse, referring to his sermons; now they have completely ceased. Those who used to come to church twice on Sunday, now come only once. Those who had friends with them used as a matter of course to bring them to church; now the fact of entertaining friends is made an excuse by the hosts for staying away themselves; and there is the bicycle. Finally, the attendance at prayer meetings is constantly declining, and it is increasingly difficult to get people to 'lead in prayer.'

But it must be said that what is here deplored as failure would by many be accounted success, and that if the higher standard be accepted many special explanations might be put forward, as, for instance, that the changes noticed are due to a change in the class of the parishioners rather than to any change of sentiment, while the fact that the Baptists do, and that possibly the High Church might, succeed where he considers that he has failed may be said to raise some questions of religious taste rather than to indicate a decay in religious sense.

In Holy Trinity, the southern-most parish of West Greenwich, there are two churches corresponding with the parts into which the area is practically divided. That on Blackheath Hill gives its name to the parish, and the other, Emmanuel, is by the side of the Ravensbourne River, near the Recreation Ground.

The congregations are not large at either church, and the vicar modestly attributes the slack attendance at Holy Trinity to people becoming tired of hearing Sunday after Sunday the same voice. But the plain truth is that his is not a church-going population, and it is very probable that of those who come, many live outside of the parish, north, east or west, for the parish is distinctly poorer than its surroundings.

Taking the two churches together there are one thousand children for Sunday school, and there is also a fairly prosperous National school. Emmanuel is a mission church and is helped with funds and teachers for its Sunday school from St. Michael's, Blackheath.

About this district we have not much information, but had there been much more to know we should probably have learnt it. The Baptists have a church, which is at present without a pastor, in Lewisham Road. It claims a membership of nearly three hundred, has three hundred and fifty children in its Sunday school, and has established a small mission in Cold Bath Street. There is also an undenominational Gospel Mission and Sunday School in Blissett Street. Otherwise we hear of nothing.

When we are told, as we are, that the neighbourhood is 'over churched and over chapelled,' we have evidently only a repetition of what was said in St. Paul's parish, where in truth the concourse of churches and chapels is found ; and we may fairly assume that their adherents, actual and possible, are scattered far and wide, and are small in number compared to the whole population ; and that, in dealing with the poor wherever they may find them, their work is also widespread and apt to over-lap.

§ 4

EAST GREENWICH

The portion of the parish of St. Alfege to the east of Greenwich Hospital is, by that fact, very much cut off from the churches both of St. Alfege and St. Mary, but the distance does not prevent the better circumstanced children found amongst the poor population to the east from making their way to the West Greenwich Sunday schools. St. Mary's Institute, which deals with the eastern side, has thus none but the poorest and "they are a good deal with us," says the report, "for, as they would otherwise be in the streets, they come on Sunday evening as well as Sunday afternoon and every night of the week except Saturday; and if we had more teachers we should see a good deal more of the children even than we now do." One-third of the one hundred and forty, who are in regular attendance, are under eight years of age; and many are only three, four or five years old. The work done by the Institute is summed up in Froebel's motto, „Kommt lasst uns den Kindern leben." The elder ones take their place in this system—in this large family of poor neighbouring children. Beyond such Kindergarten work there is a little knot of young men as constant in their attendance as the children themselves, but for the rest the operations of the parish church here seem practically confined to the calls of collectors for the Provident Fund and the judicious administration of charity.

There is a Board school in Old Woolwich Road in this parish, which, like the Randel Place School in West Greenwich, has been noted for truants, and in which an interesting and it seems successful experiment has been made. There is little difference between the poverty here and that found in St. Peter's parish, the class of children being practically the same. Truants

are no weaklings, and in order to check truancy the present master determined to make his school attractive 'on the muscular side.' The gymnasium became a class-room, and football, cricket and swimming took their places in the curriculum. It is now the ambition of every boy to represent his school in the contests that are arranged, and matches are played on Saturdays. The example of the great public schools is modestly followed. Each eleven, or team, has its particular colours, and every boy in each eleven a special suit of clothes. This suit, complete in every particular, packed in a bag, is taken home on Friday night for use on Saturday, and comes back on Monday morning. The regulations as to cleanliness are very strict. At the outset each boy had to strip before the master, but this is no longer necessary. The lesson of self-respect has been learnt. The effect of this system on ragged boys is marked. They see that they can look like any other boys when well dressed, which had probably never entered into their heads before ; and self-respect brings self-restraint in its train. The system only applies directly to the chosen elevens, but indirectly the tone of all is set by it, and a feeling of loyalty to the school and to the masters springs up.

It is to be noted that the aim here is exactly the same as that of the West Greenwich School. Self-respect is again recognised as the most important lesson. To attain this end many different roads may be taken, but for boys none better can be found than that which lies in the discipline of ordered games. Who can say what victories for England may not be won even on the poor 'playing fields' of Greenwich ?

The district of one of the City missionaries lies mostly in this part of St. Alfege's parish. He is an old man who has been here more than thirty years, and is mainly supported by the Congregational Church on Blackheath. He visits six hundred and fifty families,

occupying in this way from three to six hours a day, and manages to complete his round in about five weeks. All, he says, are glad to see him. 'Everybody knows him.' They tell him their troubles, and look to him for advice, and will listen to the Word of God when he reads it; but they don't go to church or chapel. 'All you will ever get to church in Greenwich have been got there long ago,' he says, and he thinks that too much rather than too little is being done in this direction. Others visiting in his district, are a scripture reader from St. Alfege's, some 'Grey' and 'Blue' ladies in the part belonging to Christ Church, and several nurses. No place, he avers, has ever been so thoroughly and so constantly worked as East Greenwich, the religious efforts of wealthy congregations from Blackheath having always overflowed in that direction. In this, as we have seen, it differs very much from the poor parts of West Greenwich, but in East Greenwich the extension of religious effort is general. The whole place is indeed described by the minister of the Maze Hill Congregational Church as being 'covered with mission halls and workers,' among whom any attempt to secure co-operation has failed.

Christ Church is a huge parish with a population of over twenty-five thousand, and is growing at the rate of a thousand a year. The people are said to be two-thirds working class and one-third clerks, shopkeepers and gentry. For this parish there are two churches, two mission rooms and schools, and a very large staff, including ladies both 'Grey' and 'Blue,' three nurses, and a deaconess.

Christ Church itself obtains quite fair congregations of middle-class people both morning and evening. It is a pew-rented church with a few free seats, and does not aim much at popularity. The vicar frankly admits that short of some great revival he sees no chance of winning the working classes to religious observances;

but apart from this a good deal is done to bring the Church in touch with the people. There are day schools with seven hundred children, and Sunday schools with double that number; and every week a thousand parochial visits are made, systematically, though not from house to house. In this direction the nurses' work is reported as 'admirable,' and through them dinners for the sick are distributed. It may be added that there are one hundred weddings and as many as seven hundred baptisms every year. Altogether in some manner from half to two-thirds of the population come into contact with the Church.*

The mission district of St. Andrew is to be made a separate parish, and the original mission church has been pulled down to make room for the new church now building. At present the services are held in the school, and are attended by very few.

Bugsby's Marsh, at the northern extremity of the Greenwich marshes, where the mission church is situated, was till recently one of the most out-of-the-way spots conceivable. At the end of a peninsula of marsh on the river bank opposite Blackwall, there were a few factories, a little colony of pilots, one or two groups of workmen's houses, and a public-house called the Sea Witch, with booths and benches sloping to the river, where pleasure parties coming by water could be entertained. From reach to reach, as the river circles round, and southward to Greenwich, all was marsh land, cut up by deep dykes to make market-gardening possible on the sodden soil. Only to the central part does this description still apply. Many changes have come and others are pending. The entire river front has now been taken up by factories of various kinds. The booths and benches of the Sea Witch are powdered over with a fine deposit from cement works, and the

* We regret to say that Mr. Reaney, the late vicar of Christ Church, has recently died.

smell of tar and other odours fills the air. Hundreds of workers troop in daily, and by 6 a.m. the place is alive; at mid-day come wives or children with dinner bundles, and later the road is filled with men hurrying homewards. This development has been hastened by the opening of communication with Blackwall by the great roadway carried under the Thames; a very remarkable engineering achievement, which has not only assisted in bringing this district into use, but has made all Greenwich more of a thoroughfare. It is hoped that ultimately the marshes when built upon will become one of the best parts of East Greenwich, but the start made has not been altogether happy. The London County Council has tried to set an example, and its buildings are good, but have been expensive, and some of the new streets are a disgrace. 'Do-as-you-like streets,' the missionary calls them, where the landlords, to obtain tenants at all, have taken anybody and everybody. It is said that the tunnel has brought in undesirable people, but I am more inclined to blame the unsatisfactory character of these houses, and the evils of a low marshy situation which one should suppose it would be the work of years to redeem.

The late Mr. Brooke Lambert, of St. Alfege, and Mr. Reaney, of Christ Church, with Mr. Hills, curate-in-charge at the minor church of St. Andrew, were Broad Churchmen, and worked more or less on the same lines. The views expressed by all three as to the condition of the people, social and religious, are very similar. All three denounce the attempt to spread religion by means of charitable gifts, and strive to keep clear of it themselves. All three cause their visitors to collect savings in place of distributing alms. Their opinions are frankly expressed: 'Working men,' they say, 'so far as they think about it at all, are Protestants and Bible men.' 'It is not more ritual, but less, that is wanted.' 'Curates are sanguine. Now it is a bell

they want, and now a choir (to make a mission service successful), but all efforts end alike in failure.' 'The most effectual work is done outside the church ; more good can be done in five minutes of private talk than by twenty sermons.' 'Among non-churchgoers are found many more strong and independent, and on the whole satisfactory, characters than among churchgoers.' But these witnesses speak of the prevailing immorality as awful. 'Men need to be taught to lead decent and moral lives.' Thus the problem remains, and however liberally the work of the Church may be regarded, fully half the population are untouched by it. There is plenty of room for other efforts.

North of Trafalgar Road the map shows a good deal of blue, but much more purple and very little pink. Almost everywhere the poor are present, but nowhere is the amount of poverty overwhelming. No population could be more interesting or, it might be supposed, more hopeful to deal with, but the religious competition that results does not conduce to success.

Marlborough Hall, Old Woolwich Road, is one of the missions of the 'Open Brethren.' It originated eleven years ago when Mr. Turner, who conducts it, was moved to start Gospel meetings in 'Good Duke Humphrey's Hall,' at the corner of the park. At the end of six months over one hundred converts were claimed, and these being called together decided to put the work on a permanent basis. Each member contributed threepence or sixpence a week according to means, and this system has been continued ever since. Out of the fund thus raised, supplemented by a collection on Sunday mornings, rent and other outgoings have been paid, and something is left for charity. There are about forty workers, all volunteers, mostly young people who have been trained in the mission. The hall, for which they pay rent to one of themselves, is a well kept, comfortable square build-

ing with a deep gallery and some rooms attached. It is crowded on Sunday afternoon with children, and in the evening fairly filled with adults for a cheerful and musical Gospel service. The morning service—called in this community 'the breaking of bread,' already referred to in a previous chapter—is less numerously attended, but when the table of the Lord is hospitably set out with large wholesome loaves of bread it is a remarkable scene.

Before the evening service, the year through, and also after it in Summer, open-air services are held to spread the light. These services are managed by the young people. They also visit, and in one way or other the numbers of those who attend the services of the hall are maintained. It is evident that this church offers to some just what their souls demand. One by one they are found; be it by preaching at the street corner, or visiting in the homes. Some slip back, but others remain, and to these may be added a few who retain the impress of the teaching received in the Sunday school and remain loyal to the body to which they owe their religious conceptions. The total numbers thus reached and held are not great, and the influence exerted is neither so wide nor so deep as the workers would have us believe, and would fain believe themselves, but, so far as it goes, this certainly is sound, genuine religious work.

The action of the Wesleyans at Victoria Hall, though on a larger scale, is less spontaneous. It is an effort to evangelize the poor, and adopts the usual social programme for this purpose, in connection with which they admit 'too much is given.' The most successful item numerically, is the 'Pleasant Saturday Evening,' when, with a strong musical programme, the hall is filled. To the religious services there come the accustomed faithful few on Sunday morning, an ultra-select gathering for a musical P. S. A. in the

afternoon, and a quite good evening congregation. All are the pick of the people, rather than the non-churchgoing poor for whose sake, I think, the funds were raised to build the hall. It is a very remarkable structure, and in its design ideas have been taken from the music-halls. Entering, with wide doors on the level of the street, the floor of the hall slopes downwards towards the stage or platform. For popular purposes it would seem to be an excellent design, and at the same time a church-like effect is preserved by the Gothic character of the roof.

A few yards further along the Woolwich Road stands a Baptist church. Started some years ago as a mission at a small hall in Azof Street, it made a great success. Those responsible were led on to build the present church, but have got into financial difficulties, and are less strong than they were in the old building, where they had crowded meetings. They have doubtless suffered from the competition of Victoria Hall and of Rothbury Hall, both of which have money to spend.

The Baptists themselves give little. Theirs is a poor Church, and moreover they are conscious of the extent to which Greenwich is pauperized by public charities, by the bounties of the rich, and the efforts of the missions, so that, as they say, people expect you to do something for them. The building is arranged to accommodate eight hundred, but not one hundred attend in the morning nor more than two hundred at the outside in the evening. There are from eighty to one hundred Church members. The Sunday school is very small, only half what it was in the old quarters; the whole work has shrunk.

The posters announcing their Sunday services, and setting forth the attractions, appeal in vain to the passer by. 'Can you—will you come?' But, alas! they do not, either in the morning or in the evening, or even to the men's own or women's own services in

the afternoon. Hardly any are drawn from the streets near the chapel. Those who do attend come still from the neighbourhood in which their old mission stood; and the open doors of the two rival mission halls gape between. It is the story of a mistake.

The Congregational mission at Rothbury Hall, which I have coupled with Victoria Hall, has been, perhaps, the worst of the two as a pauperizing influence, while, considered as a religious influence, it appears to have been more exotic and less effective. But the hard lesson is being learnt. The evangelist who has charge of the work is conscious of the evil that results if his people look for everything they require to the rich parent church at Blackheath, and he has been trying to 'cut out the cancer.' The elaborate buildings were the gift of Mr. Vavasour, a member of the Blackheath congregation; and cost, we are told, over £20,000. The Gospel services are not attended by any large numbers; and the Sunday school is the principal piece of work. It is very large, having one thousand children on the books and an average attendance of eight hundred. An effort has been made to retain the older boys by means of a youths' institute and gymnasium, for which purpose the original Baptist mission which stood close by has been acquired. There are also girls' classes for cookery, hygiene, ambulance, &c., and for adults there are mothers' meetings and coal, boot and blanket clubs. In various ways a good deal of money is spent on social work.

Near to the premises of the Congregationalists, with their 'regardless of cost' look, there stands the little corrugated-iron hall of the Salvation Army, showing more signs of decay than of life. The corps is a very small one. Its captain, a lady very recently appointed to this charge, claimed 'splendid open-air meetings,' and an altogether friendly reception, but there would seem to be little or no permanent

force in the work of the Salvation Army here or anywhere else in South-East riverside London. Those who are religious-minded have found what they need in other ways, and those who are not the shafts of the Army do not touch.

Though organized co-operation has been found impracticable amongst all this religious competition, there is here, as at Deptford, good feeling and friendliness and an entire absence of anything like bitterness, due perhaps to the fact that there is no extreme ritualism in the Church of England. The broad spirit which prevails is further indicated by the circumstance that the Roman Catholic priest does not hesitate to apply to the Grey Ladies of the English Church for help with his sick.

The Roman Catholics count only a thousand in their census ; and their numbers are perhaps not increasing. The market-garden work, on which many of the Irish Catholics depended, is dwindling. Father Ryan, who was formerly at Deptford, compares his present flock favourably with the people there, and says that the people of East Greenwich, though rough and sometimes drunken, do not sponge. He finds them, too, very considerate, as, for instance, in not calling him up at night save in cases of rare emergency—a point of view, it may be noted, in somewhat striking contrast to that taken by the vicar of St. Paul's.* The attendance at Mass is fairly good ; and the Church actively organized, so far as one man can do it. This Church pays its way and supports its own schools. The collections of money are systematized in the way noted by us at Father Higley's church in Limehouse, a method which obtains also in Deptford and Bermondsey. The five districts into which this (R. C.) parish is divided are covered weekly by the lay-collectors, and the priest accompanies each in turn, week by week. The round

* See page 57.

is made early on Sunday afternoon, when most people are at home, and on the occasion when the priest himself comes, 'white money' is forthcoming (so that every fifth collection amounts, perhaps, to as much as the other four put together). The priest is welcomed and the money readily volunteered. The round, too, gives him a chance to see and notice things, and he can truthfully say, 'we do know our people.' Some charity is available for those who seem to need it, but the connection of the people with the Church is based not on receiving, but on giving.

Two London City Missions complete our tale. The one missionary is quite an old man and has worked here thirty years, formerly under the superintendence of Christ Church, but now in connection with Victoria Hall. A few women come to his week-day services. The husbands, he says, do not object 'if it is not a mothers' meeting,' but they dislike these as leading to gossip. He visits all, irrespective of creed, and as a rule finds all ready to listen, but not willing to take the trouble to go to church. The other missionary is a vigorous active young man whose district lies in the marsh. He visits chiefly amongst the factories there, having access to all except one from which for trade reasons all strangers are excluded. The men receive him well; they miss him if he does not come, and will ask the reason why, but he 'cannot see much change in them.' He, however, thinks the marsh people are better attenders at religious worship than those in other parts of Greenwich, many going to Victoria, Rothbury and Marlborough Halls. There is a Sunday school connected with his work, and there are Gospel services on Sunday. The mission has eight or nine voluntary helpers, and is in fact a Church in embryo.

He speaks of the people he visits, the dwellers on the marsh, as living very simple lives. They find

employment in the factories, and, except on Saturday, are in bed by half-past nine, and up again at half-past five. He says that both district and people are growing better, and speaks of improvement connected with the closing of four public-houses, but adds that drink is bad among the coalies, some of whom may earn £5 or £6 in a week and not have a halfpenny left next Monday morning ; while in East Greenwich, where much of the employment is irregular in its character, he thinks that no improvement can be traced. The Brethren say that the people are doing well financially owing to good trade, but are worse morally, and another City missionary reports that high wages have led to loafing and drink, while yet another of those at work here speaks of an influx of immoral people and of disorderly scenes at night, tending to drive respectable people away.

§ 5

EAST GREENWICH *(Continued)*

As we pass from the river side and proceed beyond the area of our map to the east and south-east towards Woolwich, Charlton, and Shooter's Hill, we leave behind us nearly all signs of poverty.

Facing the park is Maze Hill Congregationalist Church, which dates back nearly a century. It has no poor among its members ; but has a quiet, comfortable congregation in which the lower middle class predominates. Those who come to the services on Sunday are in the proportion of three women to one man, while on week days the few who attend are nearly all women. Large mothers' meetings and Sunday schools supply the only contact with the poor.

St. George's parish, Westcombe Park, has a mixed population of working class to the north of the railway and middle class and wealthy to the south. The services of the church are severely Evangelical, and by no class are they well attended. Amongst this population there is at present no poverty except such as may be caused by drink or idleness. The people are within reach of the Arsenal at Woolwich, and since the South African war began work has been plentiful. It has been an excellent time, say more than one of our informants, to pick out the loafers ; but the future is feared, with reminiscence of a hard winter some years ago, when two thousand people needing food waited outside Greenwich workhouse.

St. John's has a similarly divided population, and again none that are really poor. Some of the best London artisans come here to look for homes ; and among the working class there is thus an upward tendency, but in the wealthy portion of the parish the movement is downward. Twenty years ago the offertories always contained £15 to £20 in gold, but now only £4 or £5. The church has however as yet encountered no difficulties, financial or numerical. It is always well filled or full. On the working-class side of the parish there is a mission hall, and this, too, is filled on Sunday evening ; a result attributed mainly to the democratic management by a committee of working men.

The Wesleyans, whose church is in the Old Dover Road, are by far the strongest competitors. The church is small, only holding three hundred, but is full both morning and evening with lower middle-class people, small tradesmen and artisans, and a new building is to be erected accommodating twice that number. This, too, it is anticipated will be filled, for the 'cause' is a growing one. There is an active organization. Besides the minister, a Sister of the People is employed, and there are many volunteers. Financially the

church owes much to the support of a wealthy family of the neighbourhood. There are large Sunday schools and a Band of Hope for the children ; slate clubs for the men, and open-air services for the world at large. The wide net of the slate club does not help to increase the congregation, but the open-air work 'has a wonderfully strengthening effect on those who stand out in this way,' whatever the result may be on those who listen. The people of the neighbourhood, we are told by the minister of this church, are unusually godly and earnest. Hardly ever do the people he visits decline his offer to pray with them. He admits that there is a good deal of competition, and says that when a new family comes, there is a race to be first with them. It is claimed, however, that this rivalry is not of an unfriendly character.

The Baptists are referred to as competitors both by the Church of England and the Wesleyans, but the Baptist church in question is located in the parish of St. James, Kidbrooke, just beyond the boundaries of our present district, and will be heard of later.

The Presbyterians, who are also mentioned, have a small church in Vanbrugh Park, but are hardly likely to attempt much proselytizing. It is the religious centre of a small number of faithful Presbyterians living within a radius of some miles. The membership is small and the services sparsely attended.

Blackheath on the whole is Church and Evangelical, but among the rich there is much indifferentism, and Sunday parties interfere with the church or chapel-going of servants. It was the Presbyterian minister who mentioned this, but it would no doubt apply to others also.

§ 6

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

As Deptford and Greenwich were combined under one Board of Works when our inquiry was made, I have only here to supplement what has been written in the last chapter by a few extracts from local opinions concerning the administration at Greenwich. They are not altogether consistent. Mr. Brooke Lambert, speaking mainly of East Greenwich, stated that the work was conscientiously done, but Mr. Reaney, of Christ Church, said there was much jobbery, and that consequently local government was not good. Both are now dead, otherwise we might probably find that they had different portions of the work in mind. The vicar of Christ Church spoke also of fever and diphtheria being chronic, and the master of the poor school in East Greenwich says that there is an undue amount of sporadic sickness. In 1899 there were in this school eight cases of diphtheria, four of typhoid, and nine of scarlet fever ; and other years showed a similar record. Other witnesses speak of health as being good.

The vicar of St. Paul's says that in his parish the houses, though old, are seldom insanitary, and in this is confirmed by the vicar of St. Peter's. As to the inferior character of much of the building on low-lying, marshy ground, we have a large amount of testimony, but even so, there is good as well as bad. Rents, much affected by the opening of the Blackwall Tunnel, have risen greatly, and tend to increase still further, with crowding as the result. Apart from some neglect in sweeping the streets, the work of the Board is reported as having been efficient. All brothels complained of were closed.

The administration of the Poor Law in Deptford and Greenwich, involving as it does a considerable amount of out-relief, is ‘ both well and badly done,’ depending

on the relieving officer, and is characterized by one witness as 'kind' and by another as 'brutal.' Out-relief is granted too easily, but the guardians are reported, here as elsewhere, to be learning by experience the dangers of this course. They have, however, always preferred to give relief in this way whenever they reasonably could, and are opposed to what is known as the Whitechapel system. The Board is divided into several relief committees, but all these are held in the same building, and can assemble together if any case requires joint consideration, but this rarely happens. The work seems to be conscientiously done.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES. MAP Q. (VOL. V., PART I., CHAPTERS I. and II.). Deptford and Greenwich.

Adjoining Maps—**N.** Isle of Dogs (Vol. I.) and Inner South (Vol. IV.); **W.** Inner South (Vol. IV.) and Outer South (Vol. VI.).

General Character.—The map comprises the districts of Hatcham, New Cross, Deptford, Greenwich, Blackheath, Lee, Lewisham, Ladywell, Brockley, The Newlands, and part of Nunhead. The greater part of it is divided effectually from the rest of London on the North by the Thames, on the East by Greenwich Park and Blackheath, on the South by the open fields of Ladywell and Hither Green, and on the West by a network of railway loops, arches and embankments, through very few of which communication is possible. Every class from 'yellow' to 'black' is shown on the map. There is old-established poverty in Deptford and West Greenwich, and new as well as old poverty in East Greenwich. Wealth is found in Blackheath and part of Brockley. The fairly comfortable (pink) form a connecting link between the poor and the well-to-do, stretching from the low ground half way up the hills. The land rises and falls, and the contour lines can be almost exactly traced by the colours, showing social condition; blue and purple marking the low ground round the Creek and along the course of the Ravensbourne River, as well as Loampit Vale and the valley by Brockley Station, while the hill-tops of Blackheath and Brockley stand out in 'red' and 'yellow' with 'pink' and 'pink-barred' about their bases. Great development is in progress to the South in Lee, Lewisham, New Cross, and Brockley, where the tendency is to build for the middle and lower middle classes, coloured 'red' and 'red and pink' and 'pink' on the map.

Poverty Areas.—The largest poverty areas are found on either side of Deptford Creek, that in Christ Church parish, south of the railway, being the poorest and most vicious; Giffen, Regent, Hales, and Stanhope Streets are known to tramps and low-class prostitutes throughout London, while nearer New Cross perhaps an even lower level is reached at Baildon Street (*vide* p. 27); they compare with the 'Dust-hole' in Woolwich, with Dorset Street in Whitechapel, and with the Bangor Street area in Nottingdale. The rest is connected with rough Irish waterside and gas-works poverty in St. Peter's parish, and with a rough class of men and women employed in the slaughter-houses of the cattle market in St. Nicholas' parish. Old and new poverty is found in East Greenwich, the old being in St. Alfege and Christ Church, and the new in St. Andrew's parishes: the new poverty is connected with jerry-building on the marshy clayland that makes Greenwich marshes, and also with the immigration of displaced poor from Poplar by way of the Blackwall Tunnel. Patches of old standing poverty are also found off Kender Street and Dennett Road, on the western edge of the map; off Tanner's Hill in St. John's; on either side of Blackheath Station in Holy Trinity; in Loampit Vale, off Lee Road, and off Nightingale Grove in St. Swithin's parish, Hither Green.

Employments.—The inhabitants of the 'pink' and 'blue' streets for the most part work within the district, though some find their employment in Woolwich, the 'pink-barred' and the 'red' go in to Central London by train, more especially those living in Hither Green, Lewisham, and Brockley. The great local centres of employment in Deptford are the river, the victualling yard, the cattle market, the electric supply, engineering, chemical, candle, manure, and asphalt works, flour mills, timber and wood-chopping yards. In Hatcham there are a large number of railway men. In Old Greenwich there are gas and engineering works, while further East on the Marshes are gas, cement, linoleum,

telegraph, cable and soap works. Among occupations for women are the cleaning of slaughtered animals, bag and sack making, and gold and silver thread spinning. There is an Italian colony of ice-cream vendors and asphalt workers near Knott Street, and another west of the High Street in Deptford.

Housing and Rents.—Old houses, some with pannelled passages and carved door lintels, are to be found in Deptford and Greenwich, they become newer and newer in rings extending southwards.

In DEPTFORD, in a 'light-blue' street, 10*s* 6*d* was paid for a house of six rooms, fitted for two families. In St. Mark's parish, the pink streets are regularly laid out, the houses, which are two-storeyed, having a small garden or forecourt in front and many a long piece of ground behind; the people seldom move. In WEST GREENWICH, 4*s* 6*d* was paid for two rooms in a 'dark-blue' cottage, and in another, of similar character, 7*s* for the same amount of room, while others pay 3*s* and 3*s* 6*d* per room (1899). In a new 'purple' street the whole house was let for 12*s*. There are many small, two-storeyed houses, occupied by one family, with four rooms and a back yard, at 5*s* to 7*s* 6*d* per week. The size of room differs a good deal, but generally the front room is 12 ft. by 9 ft. In East Greenwich, in the new streets which have started poor, 10*s* 6*d* was asked for six rooms and 3*s* for one room; the opening of the Blackwall Tunnel raised rents 1*s* per week. In LEWISHAM, the new houses built for the working classes are almost without exception of two storeys, with a bow window on the ground floor, protected from the street by a low iron railing; built for two families on the 'flat' system, each paying 7*s*; rent collected by an agent every week; a six-roomed house with 20 ft. of garden can be had for 9*s* to 10*s* 6*d*; 8 rooms for 12*s* to 14*s* 6*d*; 4 rooms for 7*s* 6*d* to 8*s*; single room for 1*s* 6*d* to 2*s* 6*d*. In LEE rents are high, new six-roomed houses with a bath-room let at 17*s* 6*d*; houses under £50 a year are seldom empty, but large houses, such as those in Manor Park, that used to let at £100 to £150, now find tenants with difficulty even at greatly reduced rentals. Near Lewisham Park, a two-storeyed house in a 'pink' street fetches 8*s* 6*d* to 11*s*; one family to a house usual. On the St. Germain's Estate in Hither Green houses are being built for the lower middle class at rentals varying from £28 for single-fronted, to £36 or £38 for double-fronted houses; the residences in Brownhill Road, which are the largest hereabouts, are let at about £60. This estate is destined to have three thousand houses (1899), and it is just outside the south-eastern edge of the map.

Markets.—High Street and the Broadway are the street markets of Deptford; others are Nelson Street and Church Street, in West Greenwich; Trafalgar Road, near Christ Church, in East Greenwich; and the pavement at the corner of the Lee Road, in High Street, Lewisham. So much of the outer districts is new that they have not yet settled down to markets of their own, and many travel considerable distances to make their purchases. Itinerant vendors are features of these suburbs.

Public-houses.—Public-houses and beerhouses line the main roads in Deptford and Greenwich; small clusters of them are found, together with grocers' licences, round places of public resort, such as the Broadway Deptford, Church Street Greenwich, Blackheath Station, and Lewisham Pavement. In new districts grocers' and 'off' jug licences are more numerous than fully-licensed houses. There are also a number of wine and spirit merchants selling single bottles. On the new estate in Hither Green no licensed house is allowed.

Eating-houses which cater for visitors are features in Nelson Street, which leads from the steamboat pier to the Park in East Greenwich. Notices of 'tea, roll and butter, 5*d*,' 'coffee, roll and butter, 4*d*,' 'tea,

shrimps and cake, *6d.*,' 'cut from the joint and two vegetables, *9d.*,' 'tea for large parties, *4d* per head,' are common.

Places of Amusement.—There is a music hall and theatre in Deptford and also in Greenwich. The people of Brockley, Lewisham, and Lee and the outer districts come in to the theatres, &c., of inner London or attend occasional entertainments given in the local public halls; and there are a large number of athletic clubs both for men and women.

Open Spaces.—On the west side there is Deptford Park and a number of 'islands' made by loops in the railway lines and now used as market gardens. In Old Deptford are Sayes Court Recreation Ground and St. Nicholas Gardens, both small. Further south Telegraph Hill has been secured to the public, and Hilly Fields in Lewisham forms another high and healthy recreation ground. Part of the low ground in Ladywell is a public park, and there is much land between it and Nunhead which is still open field, most of it lying low. On the east side there is the river front of Greenwich Hospital, much used by local residents, and the splendid open spaces of Blackheath and Greenwich Park. Lewisham Park is reserved for the use of those living round it. Manor Gardens, Lee, was opened this year (1902) under the auspices of the London County Council. Except in Old Deptford, the district is not badly provided with open spaces, but it would be well if the island loops spoken of above could be secured as public playgrounds for the inhabitants of Hatcham and Peckham New Town; if built upon, their situation would fit them for dangerous slums.

Health.—Life is rough in Old Deptford and Greenwich, and infant mortality high, but further south the high ground makes for health. The soil along the river's edge in Deptford and West Greenwich, and on either side of Deptford Creek, is of clay. The greater part of the low land of Hatcham, New Cross and Greenwich lies on gravel and sand; there is some chalk on the rising ground on either side of the Kent waterworks at the south end of Deptford Creek, but the high ground is composed of pebble beds and loam, with some stiff London clay intermixed.

Changes of Population.—The drift of the poor and fairly comfortable along the line of least resistance is clearly seen in the way in which population has followed the valleys; the interruption of this natural drift is apparent off the west side of Brockley Station, where the large areas shut in by railway loops are not yet built upon, while the land on the east side, which is not so enclosed, is covered with houses. In DEPTFORD there has been some demolition of the older parts and rebuilding in the form of model dwellings in Armada Street by the L.C.C., and these buildings seem to have rehoused a good number of the displaced poor. The greater part of the vicious inhabitants of Mill Lane moved to the dark blue and black streets north of the Broadway when their houses were pulled down. In WEST GREENWICH the old standing poverty remains much as before. In EAST GREENWICH there have been some poor incomers from Poplar to the new houses badly built upon marshy ground in St. Andrew's parish. In BLACKHEATH the tendency is for the richest to leave and to be replaced by a semi-genteel aristocracy of City workers. In LEWISHAM and LEE the incomers are clerks and managers, many coming from Peckham and Brixton, and the number of middle-class houseowners with servants is also increasing on the high ground on either side of Brockley Station.

Means of Locomotion.—The South Eastern and Chatham Railway runs through the district, and connects it with inner London; the trains are slow and uncertain, and in Winter the traffic is often completely disorganized by fog. Horse tramways run west from Evelyn Street to

London Bridge; East and West along New Cross Road to Woolwich and Westminster, and southwards from Greenwich Station along the Lewisham Road to Rushey Green. A better service on the S. E. & C. R., and electric instead of horse traction along the tram routes, are wanted, as well as further outlets for Old Deptford. It would be well if the trams which now stop at the east end of Evelyn Street could be continued southwards *viâ* High Street and Mill Lane into Lewisham, and eastwards into Greenwich *viâ* Creek Road and Bridge Street. The number of railway lines carried on arches and embankments act as barriers and make local intercommunication unnecessarily difficult.

PLACES OF WORSHIP.

List of Parish Churches situated in the district described in Chapters I. and II. (Part I.), with other PLACES OF WORSHIP grouped according to their ecclesiastical parishes.

All Saints, Hatcham Park.
All Saints' Miss., Kender St.
Cong. Miss., Besson St.
Prim. Meth. Miss., Besson St.

Christ Church, Deptford.
Christ Church Miss., Reginald Rd.
Cong. Ch., High Street.
Brockley Miss. (Bapt.), Creek St.
Deptford Ragged Sch., Giffin St.

Christ Church, East Greenwich.
Christ Church Miss., 80, Old Woolwich Rd.
Christ Church Miss., 72, Blackwall Lane.
Victoria Hall (Wesl.), Woolwich Rd.
Marlboro' Hall (Brethren), Old Woolwich Rd.
L. C. M., Three Cups Coffee Tav.
St. Joseph (R. C.), Pelton Road.

Holy Trinity, Blackheath Hill.
Emmanuel Miss. Ch., Ravensbourne St.
Holy Trinity Miss., Bennett St.
Holy Trinity Miss., Mount Nod Square.
Bapt. Ch., Lewisham Road.
Bapt. Miss., Coldbath Street.
Salv. Ar. Hall, Blackheath Hill.
Arlington Room, Mount Nod Sq.
Blissett St. Miss., Renbold Place.

St. Alfege, Greenwich.
St. Mary's Ch., K. William St.
St. Alfege's Miss., Hyde Vale.
St. Alfege's Miss., Church Pas.
Maze Hill Cong. Ch., Park Pl.
Wesl. Ch., London Street.
Brethren's Hall, King George St.
Brethren's Hall, Circus Street.
L. C. Miss., 63, Trafalgar Road.
Our Lady Star of the Sea (R. C.), Croom's Hill.

St. Andrew, East Greenwich.
Rothbury Hall (Cong.), Mauritius Rd.
*Thames Ch. Miss., Blackwall Lane.
Salv. Ar. Bar., Blackwall Lane.
L. C. Miss., Blakesley's Bldgs.

St. Catherine, Hatcham.
Wesl. Ch., Kitto Road.
Wesl. Miss., 14, Foxwell Street.

St. George, Westcombe Park.
St. George's Miss., Farmdale Rd.
East Greenwich Bapt. Ch., Woolwich Road.
L. C. Miss. Hall, Dupree Road.

St. James, Hatcham.
St. Michael's, Knoyle Street.
St. George's, Foxberry Road.
St. James's Miss., Pagnell St.
Ludwick Hall (Cong.), Ludwick Rd.
Bapt. Ch., Brockley Road.
Wesl. Ch., New Cross Road.
Miss. Room, 228A, Malpas Rd.

St. John, Blackheath.
St. John's Miss., Banchory Rd.
St. John's Miss., Furzefield Rd.
Presb. Ch., Vanbrugh Park.
Sunfield's Wesl. Ch., Old Dover Rd.

* Closed (1902).

St. John, Lewisham High Rd.
St. John's Miss., Harton Street.
Cong. Ch., Lewisham High Rd.
Zion Bapt. Ch., New Cross Rd.
Florence Hall (Bapt.), Florence Rd.
Brunswick U. Meth. Free Ch., St. John's Rd.
People's Hall (Presb.), Deptford Broadway.
Gospel Miss., Wilson St.

St. Luke, Deptford.
St. Luke's Parish Room, Costerwood St.
Deptford Park Wesl. Ch., Lower Rd.
Victoria Ch. (Meth. New Con.), Grove St.
L. C. Miss., 130, Evelyn Street.

St. Mark, Deptford.
Cong. Miss. Ch., Napier Street.
Amersham Hall (Cong.), Amersham Vale.
Railway Mis., Amersham Grove.

St. Nicholas, Deptford.
St. Nicholas' Miss., Albany Institute, Creek Rd.
Trinity Hall (Cong.), Pender St.
Cong. Miss., Armada Street.
Prim. Meth. Ch., Creek Road.
Mission Hall, Hughes Fields.

St. Paul, Deptford.
St. Barnabas' Ch. for Deaf and Dumb, Evelyn Street.
Bapt. Ch., Octavius Street.
Wesl. Miss., High Street.
New Jerusalem Ch., Warwick St.
Unitarian Bapt. Ch., Church St.
Friends' Meeting House, 144, High Street.
Gospel Hall (Breth.), Edward Place.
Salv. Army Citadel, Mary Ann Buildings.
Shaftesbury Hall (L. C. M.), Charles Street.
L. C. Miss. Hall, Staunton St.
L. C. Miss. Hall, 1A, Hamilton Street.
Alliance Temperance Hall, Albany St.
Church of the Assumption (R. C.), High Street.

St. Paul, West Greenwich.
St. Paul's Miss., 49, Roan St.
Cong. Ch., Greenwich Road.
Bapt. Ch., Devonshire Road.
Bapt. Ch., South Street.
St. Mark's Presb. Ch., South St.
L. C. Miss., Randall Place.

St. Peter, Brockley.
St. Peter's Hall, Cranfield Rd.
Wesl. Ch., Harefield Road.
Presb. Ch., Brockley Road.

St. Peter, West Greenwich.
St. Peter's Miss., Bridge Street.
West Greenwich Ragged School, Bridge Street.

St KATHERINE
ARTHOLOMEW
St LUKE
St CUTHBERT
Millwall
CHRIST CHURCH
Isle of Dogs
St ANDREW
ROYAL VICTORIA VICTUALLING YARD
FOREIGN CATTLE MARKET
GREENWICH HOSPITAL
CHRIST CHURCH
St NICHOLAS
St PETER
ROYAL NAVAL SCHOOL
ALL SAINTS
Hatcham Park
St MARK
Amersham Vale
St PAUL
Deptford
CHRIST CHURCH
St ALFEGE
Greenwich
St JAMES
Hatcham
St PAUL
Devonshire Road
HOLY TRINITY
Blackheath Hill
ST JOHN
THE ASCENSION
Blackheath
ALL SAINTS
Blackheath
ST CATHERINE
ST PETER
ST STEPHEN
GRANVILLE PARK
ST ANTHOLIN
Nunhead
ST SILAS
ST CYPRIAN
Brockley
ST MARY
College Park
HOLY TRINITY
ST AUGUSTINE
Honor Oak
ST HILDA
Crofton Park
ST MARY
Lewisham
ST SWITHIN
Hither Green

CHAPTER III

WOOLWICH
(WITH CHARLTON AND PLUMSTEAD)

§ 1

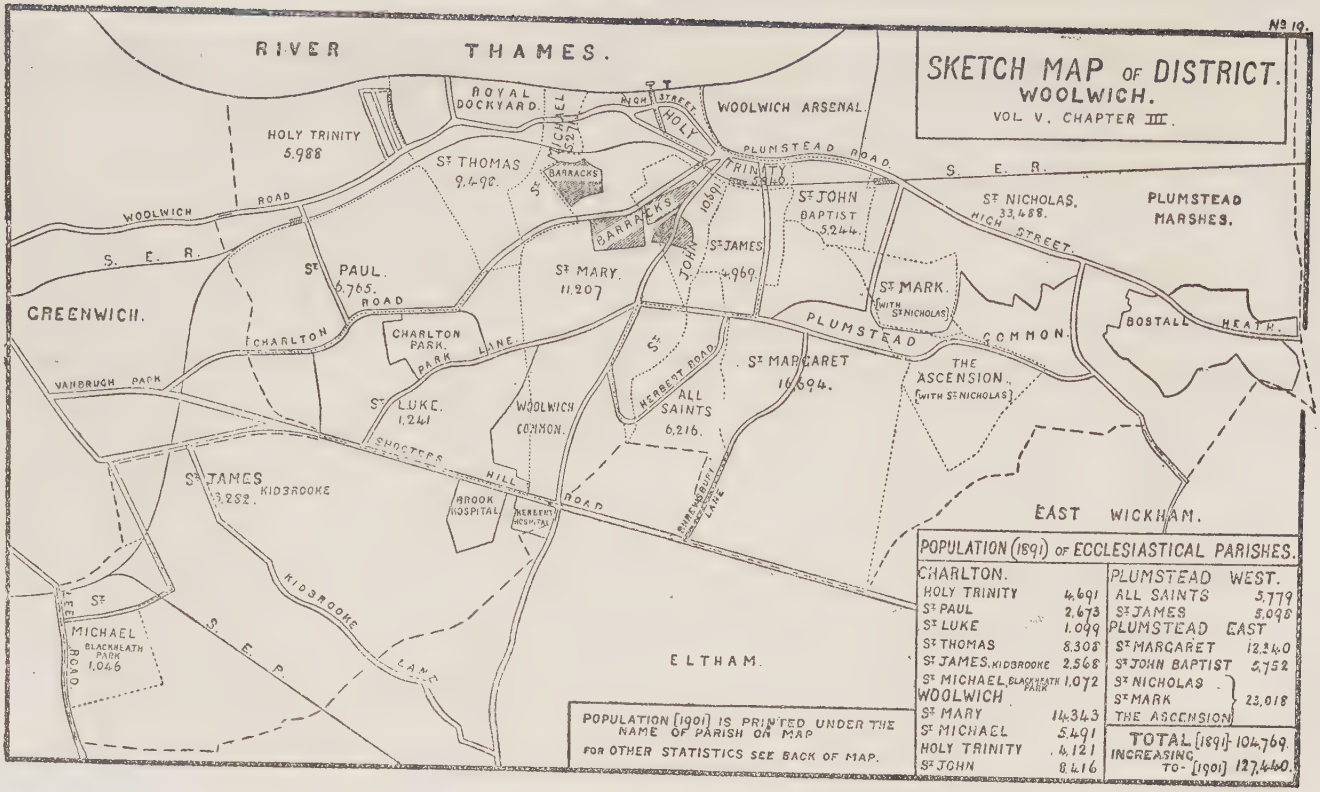
CHARLTON

Woolwich is connected with Greenwich by Charlton, New and Old. The actual link consists of a roadway, a railway, and a sewer, carried through the low-lying marshy meadows beside the Thames. The road is a raised causeway, and for some distance towards Woolwich very little of the land between road and river is fit for dwellings. On much of it such building is now forbidden. It is used for allotments and market gardens, and provides a pitching ground for the vans and tents of gipsies. Rubbish and refuse from other parts of London coming in barges is tipped on to the land, to prepare it for building; and perhaps in time it may become as solid as Belgravia. Such streets or stray houses as have by some means found for themselves a place in this area are the wretched homes of a very poor class. In some of them the ground floors, being untenable because of the damp, have been filled up with earth, but all are insanitary and unsatisfactory, ought never to have been built, and would be better destroyed. To the south of the road and railway, the ground is firm and rising, and on it, amid the hollows

and hillocks of discarded sand-pits, stands the picturesque old village of Charlton with its red-roofed cottages and old Jacobean Manor house. Between village and railway near the station is a group of new streets occupied by well-to-do artisans, many of whom buy the houses they live in, and by clerks of similar or perhaps rather higher social standing, who trust, not without trepidation, to the South Eastern and Chatham Railway to take them daily to their work in the City. Further south again lie the breezy fields of Kidbrooke, as yet almost untouched by the builder ; and here in this south-easterly direction, London ends on the higher level at Eltham Common.

Eastward of this open southern portion of Charlton, between it and Woolwich Town, lies Woolwich Common, unoccupied except by the barracks. Near the dockyard on the river verge there is a large population.

The riverside parishes in Charlton are Holy Trinity and St. Thomas, the one High, the other Low Church. They are worked with some energy and both have assistance from sympathetic Blackheath congregations. The parish of St. Thomas extends to the higher ground south of the railway, as far as Little Heath, and thus contains an admixture of rich and poor suitable for ordinary parish work ; but Holy Trinity lies entirely on the lower level, both socially and physically, and such of the population as are in comfortable circumstances are unsympathetic non-churchgoing artisans. Attendances, whether at Trinity Church itself or at the mission room, are scanty, and altogether the work is very discouraging. Solace has to be sought in caring for the individual and letting the mass go by, but it may be that the individual proves hardly less elusive than the crowd. In the pursuit of the individual the parish is visited from house to house, and this


RIVER THAMES.
SKETCH MAP OF DISTRICT.
WOOLWICH.
VOL V. CHAPTER III.
ROYAL DOCKYARD.
WOOLWICH ARSENAL.
HOLY TRINITY 5,988
St THOMAS 9,492.
St MICHAEL 5,271
HIGH STREET
HOLY TRINITY 5,960
PLUMSTEAD ROAD.
S. E. R.
BARRACKS
BARRACKS
St JOHN BAPTIST 5,244
St NICHOLAS. 33,488.
HIGH STREET.
PLUMSTEAD MARSHES.
WOOLWICH ROAD
S. E. R.
St PAUL. 6,765.
ROAD
St MARY. 11,207
St JAMES 4,969
St MARK. (WITH St NICHOLAS)
GREENWICH.
CHARLTON
CHARLTON PARK. PARK LANE
PLUMSTEAD COMMON.
BOSTALL HEATH.
VANBRUGH PARK
St LUKE. 1,241
WOOLWICH COMMON.
St ALL SAINTS 6,216.
St MARGARET 16,694.
THE ASCENSION. (WITH St NICHOLAS)
SHOOTERS HILL
St JAMES KIDBROOKE 3,252.
BROOK HOSPITAL
HERBERT HOSPITAL
ROAD
EAST WICKHAM.
St MICHAEL BLACKHEATH PARK 1,046
KIDBROOKE LANE
S. E. R.
ELTHAM.
POPULATION (1891) OF ECCLESIASTICAL PARISHES.
CHARLTON.
HOLY TRINITY 4,691
St PAUL 2,673
St LUKE 1,099
St THOMAS 8,308
St JAMES, KIDBROOKE 2,568
St MICHAEL, BLACKHEATH PARK 1,072
WOOLWICH
St MARY 14,343
St MICHAEL 5,491
HOLY TRINITY 4,121
St JOHN 8,416
PLUMSTEAD WEST.
ALL SAINTS 5,779
St JAMES 5,098
PLUMSTEAD EAST
St MARGARET 12,340
St JOHN BAPTIST 5,752
St NICHOLAS
St MARK
THE ASCENSION 23,018
TOTAL [1891] 104,769.
INCREASING TO [1901] 127,440.
POPULATION [1901] IS PRINTED UNDER THE NAME OF PARISH ON MAP
FOR OTHER STATISTICS SEE BACK OF MAP.

STATISTICS *bearing on the* AREA INCLUDED IN SKETCH MAP NO. 19. *Described in Chapter III. (Part I., Vol. V.).*

CENSUS STATISTICS.

Showing Increase or Decrease of Population.

Population in				Increase per Cent.	
1881.	1891.	1896.	1901.	1881-1891.	1891-1901.
80,845	107,324	116,494	121,086	**32·7 %**	**12·8 %**

Density of Population.

1891.	1901.
Persons per Acre.	
16·5	18·6
Inhabited Houses.	
15,979	19,900
Persons per House.	
6·7	6·1
Number of Acres.	
6,500	

Age and Sex in 1891.

Age.	Males.	Females.	Together.
Under 5 years	6,904	7,083	13,987
— 15 ,,	11,723	11,394	23,117
— 20 ,,	6,981	4,600	11,581
— 25 ,,	6,259	4,685	10,944
— 35 ,,	9,139	8,390	17,529
— 45 ,,	6,156	6,069	12,225
— 55 ,,	4,536	4,255	8,791
— 65 ,,	2,631	2,639	5,270
65 and over	1,632	2,248	3,880
Totals ...	55,961	51,363	107,324

NOTE.—The area included in the Sketch Map includes the Registration Sub-districts of Charlton, Woolwich, Plumstead West and Plumstead East, excepting a small portion of Christ Church Ecclesiastical parish, Shooter's Hill. The statistics here given refer to the whole of these sub-districts. For a more detailed statement of the Special Family Enumeration see Appendix.

SPECIAL ENUMERATION FOR THIS INQUIRY (1891).

Sex, Birthplace and Industrial Status of Heads of Families.

Sex.		Birthplace.		Industrial Status.			Total Heads.
Male.	Female.	In London.	Out of London.	Employers	Employees	Neither.	
18,917 87 %	2,960 13 %	7,976 36 %	13,901 64 %	1,267 6 %	16,622 76 %	3,988 18 %	21,877 100 %

Constitution of Families.

Heads.	Others Occupied.	Unoccupied.	Servants.	Total in Families.
21,877 (1·0)	17,256 (·79)	55,682 (2·54)	2,856 (·13)	97,671 (4·46)

Social Classification according to *Rooms Occupied or Servants Kept.*

	Persons.	Per Cent.	
4 or more persons to a room	1,312	1·2	Crowded 18·4 %
3 & under 4 ,, ,,	3,433	3·2	
2 & ,, 3 ,, ,,	15,004	14·0	
1 & ,, 2 ,, ,,	28,046	26·1	Not Crowded 81·6 %
Less than 1 person to a room	4,805	4·5	
Occupying more than 4 rooms	33,888	31·6	
4 or more persons to 1 servant	4,337	4·0	
Less than 4 persons to 1 servant & 4 to 7 persons to 2 servants	2,447	2·3	
All others with 2 or more servants	1,543	1·4	
Servants in Families	2,856	2·7	
Inmates of Institutions (including servants)	9,653	9·0	
Total	107,324	100	
Living in Poverty (as estimated in 1889)		27·9 %	100 %
,, in Comfort (,, ,,)		72·1 %	

church has a bad name for making relief dependent on religious response. Ritualistic proceedings at the outset aroused a strong Protestant feeling, but this has died away and indifference prevails.

The spirit of the Arsenal and of factory work generally, is felt to be adverse to religion. Units cannot be isolated from their surroundings; neighbours are also fellow workmen. A man has to fight against his whole environment in attaching himself to a church.

It may be remembered that in Outer East London, under somewhat similar conditions the same explanation of failure was put forward: that a man cannot escape from his surroundings; that common opinion is too strong to be resisted successfully by the individual. On the other hand, in Camberwell it was the very absence of any common sentiment or industrial bond that was deplored, stress being laid on the difficulties of parish work where the inhabitants were simply a collection of detached units.

The Sunday schools at Holy Trinity, to which five or six hundred children come, are the most satisfactory feature. The institute, men's club, and library, and even the lads' clubs, are rather unsuccessful. Boys break away when they go to work, and even old choir boys, whom the parson has known for years, cut him in the street. No wonder if at times despondency is felt.

The parish is a comparatively new one carved out of St. Paul's, Old Charlton, in 1886. The greater part of its area is not and cannot be built upon, but seven thousand people are in some way housed on the available fringe. There is a degraded and brutalized population crowded into a group of streets which run down to the river on the eastern boundary of the parish. Near them stands the church and at the western end, where live the respectable, but religiously indifferent working class, is placed the mission building, thus reversing the usual order of things.

High Church methods fail here, but it cannot be assumed that Low Church or Nonconformity would be any more successful. There are no Nonconformist chapels or missions within the parish, only a Salvation Army barrack in one of its worst streets.

The parish of St. Thomas was also formerly (but long ago) part of St. Paul's, and retains the name of Old Charlton. For its mixed population of eleven thousand the Church seeks to provide, and, I think, succeeds in providing, the kind of service, Evangelical in doctrine, with sermons for the old and bright music for the young, which is to the taste of the church-going section. The result is that from four hundred to five hundred are attracted, besides an equal number of children to the Sunday schools. The social agencies are unimportant, and the mass of the people remains untouched.

In the better parts of this parish we become conscious of the broad wave of prosperity that springs from employment at the Arsenal. It is shown by a great demand for small houses with a not too large, easily managed, garden, and whole streets of such as these have been built where land was available. The houses, which are planned to accommodate two families or one family with lodgers, were taken before the foundations were laid, and occupied before the walls were dry. Here, however, there is now no more vacant ground.

In this parish, as in Holy Trinity, near the railway and river are found streets 'where no respectable person can stay,' inhabited by a degraded population: loafers and prostitutes who, it is said, have been driven out of Woolwich by the pulling down of part of the bad area there. And there are other streets in both parishes inhabited by a low class of casual workers who are at present earning high wages, but who spend their money largely on drink. They need no gifts. If there is poverty among them it is not from lack of

money, and they will not brook interference from the Church.

It is such as these that arouse us to a sense of the trouble which may come with any serious check to present prosperity; a danger of which we are more conscious, perhaps, here than elsewhere in London. At present all who care to work are well employed, irrespective of character or steadiness of conduct or almost even of capacity. This can hardly continue: and if suddenly deprived of work, unskilled or semi-skilled and ill-educated, prone to heavy drinking, and many of them young and strong, they would be difficult to deal with and might become a danger to order in a time of hunger and distress.

In St. Thomas's parish the influence of the barracks makes itself felt as well as that of the Arsenal. The presence of the soldiers, indeed, is said to affect everything. But the parts which both they and the Arsenal play will be better described when we come to Woolwich itself.

Both Baptists and Wesleyans have chapels here, and the Brethren have one of their little meeting houses, but of none of these have I detailed particulars. These bodies are, all three, fully represented in Woolwich or its neighbourhood, the Baptists especially being a great force there.

The parishes of St. Paul and St. Luke complete the district now under consideration. The two churches lie close together, St. Paul's being ill placed, as regards the bulk of the (new) population which is found on the lower ground near the station. The church is, however, 'set upon a hill, and cannot be hid,' and perhaps if placed among its people would not be any less neglected. It gathers a 'natural congregation' of middle-class church-goers; and six hundred working-class children come to the Sunday school. Of the lower middle and upper working classes some attend

Nonconformist chapels, but more go nowhere. In this parish there is one rather poor and crowded street close by the railway, where, it is said, there is 'inward if not outward squalor;' but inwardly and outwardly alike, it is very different from the low streets by the river.

In St. Luke's there are no poor, nor even any working-class people. It is a parish of negatives. No Sunday school—no visitors (for 'whom could they visit?')—no magazine ('nothing to say in it')—no report—none of the ordinary things; except the Sunday services, and two on week-days, taken by the rector. There is not even a curate, except one who comes to help in the services on Sunday. The congregation consists largely of army people who are well-to-do, but not wealthy, and these, with their servants and a few tradespeople, form almost the whole population.

Westward, just beyond the Rectory field and famous football ground, where four parishes meet (St. Luke's, St. Paul's, St. James's, and St. John's) there is a group of streets known as Sunfields. They actually belong to Greenwich, but have not yet been described. The inhabitants of this little spot, who are decent but rather poor working class, are left, so far as the Church of England is concerned, to the care of St. John's, but are fought for also by the various religious bodies with more than common vivacity and, it is said, bribery. The minister of the local Baptist chapel says, 'We all, Baptists, Wesleyans, Presbyterians and Church tread on each other's heels.' All visit systematically, all distribute tracts wholesale, and all are ready to relieve distress. The Baptists themselves employ no fewer than twenty-two visitors; the Wesleyans are described as having an inexhaustible purse and, it is added, a proportionately large Sunday school. Their work and this competition was referred to at the end of last chapter.

The parish of St. James, Kidbrooke, which lies beyond St. Luke's to the south of the Old Dover

Road, is remarkable in that five-sixths of the parish might be, and is not, built over. On its east side there is open country for a mile and a half reaching to Eltham, of which half belongs to Kidbrooke and half to Eltham parish. The population of Kidbrooke is two thousand four hundred, or including Morden College (pensioners) and the Herbert and Brooke and Cottage Hospitals, about three thousand five hundred. The people live at the western side and are business men and officers, both military and naval, working at Greenwich or Woolwich or retired. The poor, of whom two hundred are counted, are gardeners and farm labourers. Church-going is usual; the service, which is simple and musical, avoiding all extremes, is well attended. The position of the church is strong. It is one that is able to help others.

St. Michael's parish, the last on my list in this direction, consists of a small district cut out of St. James's. The class of people is the same and so are the services of the church, 'simple, hearty and congregational.' It, too, is a well-to-do congregation and has collections in aid of six of the poorer churches of Deptford, Greenwich and Woolwich; and, in addition to money, sends out fifty or sixty workers, of whom we have already heard at the Mission Church (Emmanuel) connected with Holy Trinity, Blackheath Hill.

Both these churches co-operate with the Nonconformists on special occasions.

The Baptist Church, already mentioned as attracting adherents from Greenwich, and as working in Sunfields, stands in St. James's parish at the point where houses end at the junction of Shooter's Hill Road with the Old Dover Road, and draws its congregation of middle and lower middle-class people from the streets to the west.

In St. Michael's parish the Open Order of the Brethren has a church with a well-to-do and active

congregation, and there is a smaller (though richer) body of the Exclusives.

The Roman Catholics also have a centre which is mainly a boarding school for middle-class boys coming from all parts of the country.

§ 2

THREE ASPECTS OF WOOLWICH

Woolwich has three quite distinct aspects: (1) that of the barracks and the military, (2) the Arsenal and its artisans, and (3) the 'Dust-hole' and its depravity. I will take the last first, although, comparatively speaking, it is of little importance. The area bearing this ill-sounding name is quite small, lying tucked into the corner made by the Arsenal wall and the river, bounded by Beresford Street, High Street, and the Free Ferry. It was at one time larger and might well be smaller. Its furnished rooms and registered lodging-houses are a resting-place for the stream of tramps passing in or out of London, and at the same time the home of an extremely low class of prostitutes: two purposes with either of which Woolwich would gladly dispense. As a resting-place for tramps it compares, only on a very reduced scale, with the Notting Dale district in the North-West, forming as it does to the South-East a corresponding entrance to or exit from London; but the lodging-houses and the women who harbour here, make the area more like Dorset Street in Whitechapel.* The whole of this bad corner might easily be done away with, and if this were accomplished, as has largely happened in the similar case of Mill Lane,

* The latest accounts received state that a considerable improvement has been made in this area.

Deptford, the stream of tramps would find other channels. This, I think, is much to be desired. Neither for the soldiers, nor for the men at the Arsenal, is it well that such a quarter should exist near them. For the military the 'Dust-hole' is accounted out of bounds, and is patrolled at night; but the cheap and easy coarseness of its vice form attractions which certain characters among both soldiers and civilians seem unable to resist.

In this dark spot religion exerts no power. All attempts fail. As regards the Roman Catholic element 'the priest is powerless and seldom seen.' 'You might peg away at it for twenty years without effect,' is the opinion expressed by a Wesleyan minister. The Baptists, whose great tabernacle is hard by, send their young men and young women to preach the Gospel there, holding services in the lodging-house kitchens in winter time, and in the streets in summer; but, 'effect small—we are not satisfied,' is what they say of this work. The Salvation Army also tries its hand, and especially seeks to rescue any of the women who, being new to the life, may be approached with more chance of success. In this attempt to rescue it is said that the older women give them help; whether from motives of compunction or fear of rivalry, I cannot say. Very possibly the former, for jealousy hardly enters here. In this witches' cauldron of vice, youth on the female side plays a singularly small part; and beauty none at all.

The houses in these streets have not the broken windows and grimy uncared-for look, or the depressing smell of dirt so commonly found in streets of the lowest type; it is on the faces of the people that degradation is so unmistakably stamped. No one can pass through without being impressed by it, and also by the absence of children. The effect is strangely horrible. Thus, though really in itself of little im-

portance, being only an accidental gathering together, and not on a very large scale, of elements which exist in any large city, yet this spot comes before us with considerable force as an illustration of one of the dark sides of London life.

We pass now to the second and principal aspect: that of Woolwich as a garrison town. The place is dominated by the barracks and the military. At the Garrison Church of St. George, the worship of God goes forward by bugle call and tuck of drum. The Sunday morning church parade, held partly in the interests of recruiting, is the event of the week. The band plays and the crowds that look on block the road. Other Churches complain that the attractions of this show keep people away from their services, but it is more than doubtful whether those who turn out to see the marshalling of the troops would in any case have attended a religious service. The church itself, when filled with the men, is a striking scene. Outside, the bright brass instruments of the band lie in the portico or on the grass, and a sentinel stands at the door.

This church is opposite the Artillery Barracks, at the corner of the Common; a little lower down in the New Road is a Presbyterian Church, where five hundred seats are reserved for the soldiers; just below that again is St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, which gathers in the soldier members of that faith, and the Wesleyans in William Street set aside one hundred and fifty sittings for the same purpose. Soldiers are allowed to choose, but every man must have some religion. The principal religious bodies have each their official chaplain to the forces here. There are also three Soldiers' Institutes, which are clubs on a more or less religious basis, one belonging to the Church of England, another nominally undenomina-

tional, but really belonging to the Wesleyans, and a third, unattached, managed by some ladies.

Soldiers are by no means wanting in religious feeling, the dangers of war often making men very conscious of the mercies of God. The records of the Wesleyan Home are filled with the stories of those in the ranks who have themselves found salvation and forthwith sought to spread the Gospel among their comrades, in camp or barrack-room. 'God in His mercy has spared,' is said of all who are not hit in a battle; and of the wounded, if they recover, they, too, are 'spared'; or if they die, 'His wonderful goodness and power' may be shown in the 'awakening of souls to the precious gift of salvation;' or, finally, one thus quickened by the imminent facts of life and death, sees in everything the 'finger of God' and bows to His inscrutable decrees. It would be shallow indeed to undervalue such spiritual experiences because of the simple terms in which they find expression, or what may be felt to be the childishness of the reasoning. It is enough that the soul is awakened, and in its blindness, groping for God, finds a religion.

The proportion thus affected, those whose souls are, or ever can be, thus attuned to the 'salvation that is in Jesus Christ' may not be great, but it is probably as great as amongst civilians. Many of the circumstances of a soldier's life favour it, and, indeed, favour all the ordinary developments of religious faith. This applies to the officers fully as much as to the men, and leads many of them, when retired from active service in the Army into home mission work. 'Wherever you have a lot of army men you will have religious cranks,' is a dictum offensively put, but borne out in fact by the number of small missions to be found in the neighbourhood of Woolwich. Some of these will be referred to later.

The presence of the soldiers affects every form of

social life in Woolwich. If in some ways they give it a religious tone, in other, and more evident, ways they contribute to gaiety, and also, it must be said, to vice. The streets are brightened by their uniforms, when in accordance with established custom they parade up and down (in very orderly fashion) with their female companions. And they are treated by their friends, male or female, at the public-house or theatre—another established custom, which thus ekes out a nation's economies. Underlying these innocent pastimes lie the evils of absolutely irrepressible prostitution, which bears a very markedly professional character; and a certain amount of soldier-crime, mostly due to drink, as to which one of their chaplains kindly says: 'If civilians were arrested for offences that place a soldier in the lock-up, I should have half my congregation in prison on Sunday morning.'

Such is Woolwich as a garrison town.

An account of the Arsenal cannot be so circumscribed. Woolwich as a great national workshop spreads its influence wherever its employees reside, and in this sense the Arsenal influence is, perhaps, greatest in Plumstead. But Woolwich Town is the centre of much else besides the work done, and it will be convenient to deal with these matters before taking up our review of the whole surrounding district, parish by parish.

The position of affairs has been very exceptional. The Arsenal was already busy before the war in South Africa began; great changes had occurred in the character of war material, and efforts were being made to bring the equipment of our army abreast of the times; but since the war commenced these efforts have had to be redoubled and the capacity of the Arsenal pushed to the uttermost. Not only has there been work for all here (and in all private manufactories of arms and ammunition also), but

overtime has been in effect compulsory. The work has been very exhausting, the earnings both high and regular. So-called unskilled men, of the highest grade of ordinary labour, men who are no doubt in a measure skilled, but who technically have no 'trade,' have been making on piece-work up to as much as $8\frac{1}{2}d$ an hour; while young men and even boys, rapidly acquiring facility in some particular process, soon earn men's wages. It is not to be supposed that this state of things can last. Even a slight contraction in the volume of work, or a slight increase in the total facilities of production, will re-establish competition between private and national sources of supply, and bring back normal conditions; while any great contraction in army work, or in general trade, might very probably produce abnormal conditions in an opposite direction. But for the time all has been prosperity. It has already continued a fairly long time, and no considerable change is at present apprehended. It is therefore very interesting to see what use is being made of this present and prospective prosperity.

I have spoken only of the Arsenal in this matter because its importance is so transcending, but the Dockyard has been active also; and other works, such as those of Siemens Brothers, have swelled the total of industrial employment in the neighbourhood.

Rapid extension of work has attracted an abnormal proportion of young men, both married and single, and by this the whole population has been affected; men, wives, and children, all are young. Young unmarried men, having secured employment, seek wives and often bring them from a distance. Thus what we see is the creation of homes on a remarkable scale. This is the great economic factor of the situation. It is responded to by the building of houses, and a great development of retail trade.

The pressure upon house accommodation has been very great; 'a hundred applicants for every house,'

says one informant, and thus, although the movement has been very irregular, rents have risen extraordinarily, in some cases even as much as fifty per cent. In Woolwich itself there were few available sites, but in the district round house building has been active both through building societies, which are here exceptionally strong, and by private and co-operative enterprise. Good earnings and confidence in their continuance, encourage men to buy their houses. The bargain, as has been already mentioned, is often made even before the house is built. The buyer undertakes to pay so much down, and in addition a rental calculated to complete the purchase in so many years.

No doubt good profits have been made by speculative builders, and larger and larger schemes are projected. Amongst the most enterprising of these must now be counted the Woolwich Co-operative Society, which has prospered greatly, and is able continually to extend its operations. How large the capital sums are that are devoted to building new homes for the people, to be justified by if not actually repaid out of their earnings, will hardly be believed.

One private builder whose policy it has been to build and sell outright, and who has built extensively at Hither Green on that plan, is now laying down five thousand houses between Plumstead and Eltham. The houses he builds sell for between £300 and £400. The calculation is a simple one: five thousand houses at £300 would come to a million and a half; or at £400, to two millions; and this is only one speculation out of several, all based on the same expectation. The Woolwich Co-operative Society has paid more than £50,000 for a piece of land, and on it proposes to build, under the management of its own works department, four thousand houses at the rate perhaps of two hundred a year, providing thus for a prospective population of from twenty-five thousand to thirty thousand

souls at a capital outlay of a million and a quarter ; all to be provided, in one form or another, out of working-class savings.

This Co-operative Society is so remarkable in itself, and plays so great a part in the lives of the people, that it merits full description. There is nothing at all like it elsewhere within the boundaries of London. Only at Stratford is there a parallel instance, where the Society draws the nucleus of its *clientèle* from the men employed in the Great Eastern Railway works ; as it does here, on a much larger scale, from those of the Arsenal. The business at Woolwich has experienced a steady growth largely due to the shrewdness, trustworthiness and enterprise of one man.* The Society began with forty-seven members and a capital of £27, and during the first year did a trade of less than £500. At the end of 1900 it had more than 17,000 members, and nearly £275,000 of capital, and its sales during the year amounted to £350,000. In addition to the central stores in Powis Street (now being entirely rebuilt) there are half a dozen branch stores, and one at least of these, that in Lakedale Road, Plumstead, is itself a large emporium of household supply. Half the population deal at these stores, and on the average each family dealt with spends fully ten shillings a week. The profit returnable to the members comes to nearly two shillings in the pound. Much of this is accumulated at interest, and deposits are also received from members ; with the result that there is ample capital to keep pace with the expansion of the population as well as for new undertakings, such as the building scheme referred to. The management is bold in establishing branches almost in advance of the population, so that those who settle into new quarters find the store ready for them.

* Mr. Alexander McLeod, who became manager at the start in 1869, and continued in that position until his death in May, 1902.

The Society has had to face the competition of large low-priced cash salesmen, whose well set-out windows brighten the main streets, such as Lipton's and the Home and Colonial Stores for provisions; Gardiner's for clothing, and other shops for household requisites and furniture. These all rely on low prices. In addition, there is the competition of little local shops, selling worse articles at a full retail price, and giving credit instead of dividend to those who deal with them. Both forms of competition are dangerous. Feckless folk like to buy in small quantities at the nearest shop on such terms of credit as they can command, and are not those who scrutinize very closely either quality or price; while those who buy carefully may perhaps be better suited by the large shops which specialize; and may be more attracted by the immediate low price than by the prospect of a dividend. It is well for the Society that pride of membership plays a part in strengthening the bond; well, too, if its spirited management not only fosters this feeling, but has made the economic footing the more secure. The Society appears to cater for every want, and aims at making its stores showy and attractive on the same lines as those of the Army and Navy and Civil Service. It seems also to have done much to interest the women, who form nearly two-thirds of the members—a quite unusual proportion.

The success and progress of this great Society is one of the best proofs of prosperity and well-being among the working classes. It tells of the money which reaches the homes and is spent on the family: on food, on clothing, and on furniture, to say nothing of bicycles and pianos. Almost every house in Plumstead seems to have a piano and every young man can afford a bicycle. No doubt there is a wide margin between the average total family income and the ten or eleven shillings a week spent at the stores by each

family dealing there; but out of this margin rent has to come, and there are in addition many necessary supplies for which the Co-operative Store is hardly available or, at any rate, less convenient. The margin must also bear the drafts for pleasure. The building of the great new theatre and the crowding of the old one, speak of expenditure under this head, and holidays account for an increasing amount. Nor may we suppose that co-operators, however virtuous and thrifty they may be, do not also contribute something towards the aggregate spent in undesirable ways. Betting agencies are active; public-houses prosper. The soldiers are not solely, or even mainly, responsible for the support of prostitution; the young men from the Arsenal have money in their pockets which the soldiers have not. Some share of all this comes, doubtless, from households which deal at the Stores, but with them, and with many others too, the money spent on home life will be by far the largest item.

§ 3

RELIGIOUS EFFORT IN WOOLWICH

However it may have been in the past, Woolwich suffers no longer under neglect from the Church, but is the field for many efforts which, although the measure of their success is disappointing, are in themselves deserving of praise.

The old parish church of St. Mary Magdalene claims a past reaching back to early Saxon times. Its position, fronting the river, is exceedingly fine, but it must, one should think, have been seriously exposed to Danish attack in those days. The present building is not old, and lacks architectural merit. It is, in fact,

a very ugly square-towered structure of dusky yellow brick, but commodious within.

The rector is a remarkable and somewhat representative man : representative of the most modern ideas on London parish organization. His work is, as must always be the case, an admixture of failure and success ; and if the former is greater and the latter less than one might expect, I think it is because he (and the ideas he represents) attempts in vain to reconcile High Church principles with popular aims. This incompatibility could not be better shown than in an address to the residents of his parish, written some years ago, but as fresh to-day as when it was written because in it he was in truth speaking not to his flock—for they could hardly have understood a word of it, or if understanding, would have had no sympathy—but to his own heart, or it might be to the hearts of some of his brother clergy.

The address is not exactly 'above the heads' of his parishioners ; neither is it 'under their feet,' like the pearls of the proverb. Such phrases fail altogether to represent the position when, with regard to all the deeper issues of life, there is no common ground of sympathy. What, for instance, would the mass of his congregation be likely to make of such sentences as these, profoundly true though they may be, in which the rector is describing an Ideal Church : It should be, he says, "no archaic relic of a dead past, but the great school of Christian character on which all true progress must depend to-day and always." And he goes on, "My root idea of the Church is that it is meant by Christ to be at once both democratic and sacramental. The Sacraments, indeed, remain the most democratic institutions even of this day. . . . . What is it that creates such a dread of High Church ? . . . . . It is not its mysteriousness, its love of beauty and order, its reverence ; for these

things in themselves must be approved by all true natures ; but it is, I conceive, the fear that behind all this lies the imperial sacerdotal spirit. . . . . In their historic memory there looms the tyrant claim, both spiritual and secular, to stand between the individual soul and God, to hold the keys of heaven and hell. . . . . But is this the true view of the ideal Catholic Church ? No ! . . . . . The priest is so called because he is the elder among a society of priests, he exercises his functions, and he alone in the society has the right to exercise those functions, because they are delegated to him for the sake of order by the society of priests and kings that we call the Church. Every member of the Church, in the Christian sense, is a priest and a king (Rev. v. 10 ; 1 St. Peter ii. 9). . . . . But now having tried to remove that stumbling block of a peculiar claim which is sometimes made for the priesthood, it is all the more important that I assert the claims of the Church as the Bride of Christ, the trustee of the faith, the dispenser of the Sacraments which Christ gave her as effectual and special means of grace. And further it seems to me that in the historical continuity of her three-fold order, she has claims to be called *The Church* hard to gainsay. These three notes of the Church—her creed, her Sacraments, her order—are the notes by which she preserves her oneness with the Church of the Apostles. . . . . There is no bigotry in saying that those who cannot see their way to accept these claims, but who make for themselves a new body, do not belong to the Church . . . . . we do not condemn them or visit with penalties. . . . . We gladly work with others on the ground of our common humanity in all those points wherein we are agreed. . . . . We will not play with the word Church. I do not deny that the Church is competent to alter, but her *rationale*—her creed, her offices, her sacraments of initiation and

fellowship, these for eighteen hundred years she never has altered. They are fixed, primary, divine, and will remain as unchangeable in the Kingdom of Grace as the primary laws of nature."

These ideas plainly reflect a genuine struggle of the soul seeking for law and order in a disordered world; groping (like the soldiers) after God, and finding a religion. From such struggles men arise ready to give their lives to the service of man. I make no apology for this long extract, and may have to trouble the reader with others in an effort to answer the question 'Why do we fail?' which I have found asked by the clergy themselves more often in Woolwich than elsewhere. But (using again the words of the rector), "I turn from these few remarks, as general principles, to note for a few moments the signs of the times, and then to review the many organizations that gather round St. Mary's."

The 'signs of the times' referred to were some labour troubles, and these are treated in a spirit with which those appealed to, if it be a circle of working men, would indeed sympathize, if they ever read the address; but the evident pouring out of a troubled spirit that precedes would, I think, even if read, hardly have for them any meaning at all. In matters other than religious the rector of St. Mary's, we are told, 'carries the thoughtful section of the working classes with him.'

Of the parish population (1891) of about fourteen thousand (the numbers were less in 1901) the soldiers account for four thousand, and are under the care of their five chaplains. Of the ten thousand civilians, it is estimated that five thousand are of the labouring, four thousand of the artisan, and one thousand of the shop-keeping class, with clerks, &c. There is no resident middle-class population, but of these the congregation includes some that come from outside. The church holds eight hundred. The

numbers attending are not great, and women largely preponderate; but there is a considerable proportion of decent working class, including a number of young men and young women. In this respect the church is more successful than most, but it cannot be said that the working man comes to any great extent. Nor does the service held in the mission hall differ in its results from those of such places generally. There are the usual social organizations and Sunday schools, well organized, with a full staff of teachers, and there are also day schools. Besides the school teachers there are thirty voluntary district visitors drawn from the working class, a paid mission woman, three curates and the rector—in all a considerable force at work. The visitors act as collectors of savings. There is a strong body of communicants, many of whom are men—'an individual response' to honest individual work, and to 'sweet temper, solid worth and a self-denying life.' It is, so far as it goes, a church of the people. But it does not go very far.

At one of the shops of the Arsenal, among a hundred men, a churchman, who worked there, estimated that there were fifty who never went to church at all, thirty who attended two or three times a year (that is, on occasions like harvest festival); and of the twenty remaining, that twelve were chapel-goers and eight church. These figures seem not improbable, although twenty per cent. of religious adherents among working men is unusually high, and, if anything, the figures may perhaps exaggerate the number of church as compared to chapel-goers.

Holy Trinity, which is adjacent to St. Mary's, is the parish which includes the 'Dust-hole,' and must, I suppose, be accounted one of the failures, for although a centre of even unusually devoted work, of precisely Church activity there is little. But as

there are those that apparently succeed and yet fail, so are there those that apparently fail and yet succeed; and to the latter class the vicar here, I think, belongs. He himself claims Time as the great ally for those "who have no natural effectiveness," and hopes there is "a cumulative force in going on doing the same things with what faithfulness one can over a good stretch of years." He is addressing his congregation, and it is an address which, like the one from which I have quoted at such length, lays open the heart of the writer. It, too, is an apology as well as an appeal. The other might, perhaps, be read, but would not be appreciated; this one might be appreciated, but most probably would not be read beyond the limits of a very small circle. The work, he tells his congregation, is theirs as much as his, "as instruments in God's hands, intrusted for a short space with the care of one little corner of His Church"—and by that thought to be purged alike of conceit and "that inverted conceit which consists in moping over failures and weaknesses." He refers very simply to the cold and draughty church which made it "positively dangerous" to sit through a service in Winter, and of his hopes of effecting a cure of this, and then goes on to speak of that "House not made with hands to be built by God's Holy Spirit," and of the insufficient roll of their communicants, and of the lapse of so many of those he has prepared for confirmation; and takes himself to task for this failure. What, then, practically could be done? He asks them for advice, and goes on to point out the value and necessity of the Sacrament to the structure and discipline of a Church, and the rule of life that should result. Turning then to his own duties he expresses the need of the clergy for the pressure of opinion "expecting them to do their duty" (to come themselves to church to see that it is done is slyly implied),

and he asks if any layman could say what were the eight vows taken by those admitted to the priesthood. The report is full of homely wisdom and much quiet humour ; and, it may be noted, is pervaded by a most democratic spirit. It would not be ineffective if it were read ; but then I fear it is practically not read ; and though the vicar has gifts as a preacher, they are not those of popularity.

The portico of the church fronts the market place, and the body of it fills the (not very wide) space between two streets. To it once all the fashion of Woolwich flocked, but now with difficulty it pays its way. In spite of a worn out organ the music is ambitious, and an attempt has been made to take advantage of the situation of the church, close to the main entrance of the Arsenal, by providing organ recitals in the dinner hour during Lent. These have been very successful, "the one thing that appeals to the working man is good music." Each recital concluded with a hymn, in which the men joined, followed by a collect (but no collection) and the benediction.

In Beresford Street, not many yards away from this poor, chilly church, fighting its difficult battle, stands a great tabernacle of the Baptists, to which crowds repair, making a very striking contrast. Why then, or in what sense, does the Church of England fail? The question will in part be answered if we can learn how and why the Baptists succeed.

On one of the foundation stones of this tabernacle (in these cases the ceremony is not limited to one stone), we read, "This stone was laid by the Rev. J. A. Spurgeon in memory of his brother Charles Haddon Spurgeon 'a servant of Jesus Christ'— 20 June 1895." But, except in their financial boldness, in the buoyant faith shown in the construction of such a building, and in the common name of 'tabernacle,' although both are Baptist, there is little resemblance

between this congregation and that which maintains the Spurgeon tradition at Newington.

Mr. Wilson, the pastor here, works upon altogether different lines. This is due to the character of the man as well as that of the human material from which he draws his congregation; but reveals a power of adaptation which we have seen specially exemplified under the present Charles Spurgeon at Greenwich, where the class of the people has changed greatly during the term of his pastorate. In Woolwich there has, indeed, been no change of this kind. Artisans consistently represent the solid middle-class of its society, and it is mainly from amongst the artisans that Mr. Wilson's congregation is drawn. They are such as save and buy their own houses at Plumstead, and live comfortably; a selection, and not the ruck; men with a trade, not labourers; men who 'earn good wages and spend them on their homes and wives and children.'

Mr. Wilson himself attributes his success with this class to their knowledge that he is in sympathy with them. They form his diaconate and rule the Church. The impulse comes from him, but all else from them. They find the money and they do the work. They provide some two hundred young people ready to give their spare time to the Church work. Fifteen hundred children are taught in their Sunday schools, and the Band of Hope numbers seven hundred. The young people preach as well as teach. Besides street corners and lodging-house kitchens, they use two mission chapels as centres of work. In all this their pastor takes little part. He cannot. It is his duty to occupy his pulpit with power, to fill his church, which holds two thousand people, and to maintain the membership, which stands at fifteen hundred. He has to breathe life into the whole organization, and he does it. His spare time and surplus energies he gives to public

work. He is a member of the London School Board, and takes a keen interest in all local affairs. In religious matters he is an uncompromising Protestant to whom High Church views are anathema, and in politics an ardent Progressive.

Though not eloquent, as a preacher he is forcible and original, without affectation or effort, except perhaps in occasionally straining after the eloquence he does not possess. He is perfectly at ease with his people. He does not speak down to their level, but, though altogether superior to them in education and power of thought, expects them to reach up to him. The means are adequate, the aims not too high, and success is assured. In a broad sense sympathy between the pastor and his people is at the bottom of it all.*

There is in this combination of eager church-going with social politics and the spread of the Gospel by Young People's Christian Endeavour, something more of the new Wesleyan than of the old Baptist spirit. Music is appealed to. A full orchestra takes the place of the precentor's fork. There is more joyousness, less thought of impending judgment. The difference can be seen in the faces of the people. Hardly would they be taken by any close observer for Baptists at all. This may in part be due to the average youthfulness of the congregation, which shares this characteristic with the whole population of the neighbourhood, but

* What is written above was taken entirely from my own notes, but is confirmed by the following extract from the evidence of one of his Church of England neighbours :—' Wilson the Baptist, at the Tabernacle, is the most successful man with the working class. But I do not see in what his particular strength lies, though I have tried to find out his secret. He is a good preacher and a good man, but not particularly clever or intellectually strong. We are as good men, as good preachers and perhaps rather stronger intellectually, but we fail; why is it? Mr. Wilson is a man who always has a book in his hand, keeping his mind active; though not a student, he gives his congregation a great deal to interest them, and also a great deal to do for him; he appears to delegate his authority, but in reality rules. Are these the secrets of his power, or is it that he is more of their class and can say things which somehow we cannot?'

mainly it coincides with a widespread popular tendency towards greater gaiety. The power to adapt himself to this growing tendency is one of the measures of Mr. Wilson's sympathies.

Their church-going, and all that is connected with it, plays a great and wholesome part in the lives of these people; but the least satisfactory development is the attempt, which perhaps their creed compels, to rouse dormant souls to salvation by emotional appeals to 'experiences.' There are times when, and conditions under which, these strange freaks of the spirit are, for certain natures, an inevitable and natural ebullition, breaking down the boundaries of the flesh and, in a sense (which I will not try to define), opening the gates of heaven. But such experiences are dangerous forms of spiritual food, and prayer meetings can be put to better uses than the attempt to galvanize them into existence.

In addition to this great Baptist establishment, there are within the bounds or in the immediate vicinity of the three central parishes—St. Mary Magdalene, Holy Trinity and St. John—churches of various other denominations: Congregationalist, Wesleyan, Primitive Methodist, and Presbyterian. There are also two chapels of the Strict Baptist kind, one of which is nearly one hundred and fifty years old and the mother of many. About none of these is there anything special to say. The Presbyterian and Wesleyan have been mentioned as reserving room for soldiers at their services, and the presence of the soldiers is no doubt an attraction to others; but each of these churches has also a fairly strong 'natural body of supporters,' mainly middle-class people and tradesmen. The Congregationalists include even less of the popular, though not less of the influential, element. The Strict Baptists, as usual, have their special little flocks. It cannot be said that any of these Churches touch the life of the people in any very successful way, and their own

congregational life is rather weak. More interest attaches to the efforts of the Church of England, for in addition to those already described, the district affords specimens of almost every kind ; and they are for the most part fairly successful, though the clergy themselves are dissatisfied.

At St. John's, which is the last of the three central parishes of Woolwich, the church is very large and 'greatly overpewed,' seating two thousand. The vicar had not (in September, 1900) been there quite a year, and came to an empty church. In nine or ten months, by visiting and preaching, he doubled his congregation; that is, the average attendance, which was fifty, became one hundred. The parish has a population of over ten thousand ; but there is, he says, 'no parochial feeling in it.' Of those who rent pews only three are parishioners. 'The people think they have recognized the church sufficiently if they send their children to Sunday school.' For a vicar (who is something of a preacher), two curates, and a choir of forty persons, to say nothing of district visitors, Sunday school teachers, and a paid mission woman, there is not much to show ; but it may be hoped that more will come. For the southern part of the parish, which is completely separated from the northern by the barracks, there is a mission church, where another minute congregation gathers, and mothers' meetings, Band of Hope, &c., complete the tale. The service of the church is 'medium,' tending a little towards High (black stoles with eastward position), and this may perhaps be the kind of compromise which fails to please. At any rate, there is a greater measure of success at St. Michael's across the common to the west, where the ritual is thoroughly High, and still more so at St. James's, Burrage Road, to the east, included with Plumstead, where it is thoroughly Evangelical.

At St. Michael's, as at St. John's, the vicar is a new comer, but he has only had to carry on the tradition of his predecessors, which has made of this church a stronghold of Ritualism, and some local success is claimed. It is said that, in spite of the 'prevailing apathy,' and from amongst those 'who care for little beyond eating and drinking,' men are found who 'like definite teaching,' and it is of such that the congregation is built up, the artisan class being represented in it. The number of communicants is large compared to the church attendance, which, when we were present (apart from clergy, choir, and children), amounted at most to one hundred for the morning service and one hundred and fifty in the evening. Amongst these a very devout spirit was manifest. There are day schools for about seven hundred children, and Sunday schools with half that number.

There is, as we have said, a Roman Catholic church situated near the barracks, serving, amongst others, the Catholic soldiery. In all, it has a Catholic population of about four thousand to take care of. Beyond the soldiers, an uncertain element, they are working-class people, mostly Irish employed at the Arsenal, and large numbers of them have served in the army. The priests have a thorough knowledge of these men, and later I shall quote from their remarks. A good many of their flock are indifferent or difficult to reach; but the church has been actively worked, and the proportion of the people who 'perform their religious duties' is about as usual. There are four Masses on Sunday, at which about one thousand adults attend.

Father Reeks, the mission rector, has died since our inquiry was made. He was deeply loved by his own people, and respected by all, and his funeral was attended by a great concourse of people.

§ 4

PLUMSTEAD

The general religious tone of Plumstead is Evangelical. The vicar of one of the parishes, an Evangelical himself, 'though not so much so as the congregation,' says the people speak of the 'scarlet sin,' the 'scarlet woman,' &c., and hold the Papacy in abomination. The young think they have a mission to fight against it, and do not like to be told, as he has had occasion to tell them, that the great danger is not Rome, but disunion amongst themselves.

Plumstead at one time shared with Woolwich a reputation of parish neglect, and one of its parishes still retains this reputation. Its vicar, who has held the office for many years, is the survival of a past state of things. It might be quite easy to excuse, and even perhaps possible to defend, his course of action or inaction; but it is easier to attack, and he is attacked a good deal. To those who assume that almost everything can be done by trying, it is indeed vexatious to have to deal with those who think that nothing can be done. Through the varying exercises of criticism, be it appreciation, approval, defence, excuse, or condemnation, as to all forms of religious action in London, it will be my business later on to endeavour to conduct my readers. At present I will only say, as has been said already of some other parts of London, that it is not very easy to trace much difference, in broad results on the population, between activity and neglect, or between the many different forms which religious activity assumes. I will take each parish in turn.

St. James's is an old-established Evangelical church (black gown and evening communion), and, like St. Michael's on the west side of the common, lives by its reputation, in this case largely created by the

present incumbent. Men go where the services suit them. If one church fills, another empties, amongst Evangelicals the interchange may be with the Non-conformist churches. It almost seems (says the vicar) as though there were a fixed proportion of church and chapel-goers in each class. The most remarkable feature at St. James's is the number of church workers, of artisan or lower middle class, and the power that is delegated to them. To a great extent they manage the finances of the church; they preach out of doors, and go forth as missionaries. They are trusted, and they are loyal. None of them are rich, nor any exactly poor. In this they represent the congregation, of which the few who, by comparison, can be called rich live beyond the parish boundary.

The church (which holds about six hundred) may be nearly half-full in the morning and about two-thirds at night. It is a genuine religious gathering, with an earnest devotional spirit. The disappointment felt by the vicar no doubt arises from the fact that those touched are so select a class. All efforts to get further into the hearts of the people fail.

The attempt made at St. Margaret's, Plumstead, which is now considered the mother parish (having taken the place of St. Nicholas), is different. The ritual is, perhaps, rather Low than High, but the life of the church does not seem to depend upon any such points. The vicar, who has been here two years, has in that short time filled his church, and also enlarged it, and has put life—and joyous life—into all its work. It is a very large and scattered parish. To the south it ends in fields and woods by the side of Watling Street—the old Dover Road—while a detached portion lies north of St. James's, on the low level near the Arsenal, and here the vicar thinks it essential there should be a mission room. Meanwhile, it is where the church stands, on the hill by

the Common, that the real work lies, amongst lower middle-class people and the quite upper working class, who are the residents there. From amongst these an excellent congregation is gathered. There is also a mission-room set down to serve a group of poor streets to the south; but, all told, the congregations bear, of course, no kind of relation, numerically, to the total population, which was twelve thousand in 1891, and is over sixteen thousand now. Once more it has to be admitted that those whom the Church reaches are a selection, and that the larger field remains untouched.

All Saints' to the south and west is a more definitely middle-class church. Of workers there is no lack, and in the days when the surrounding churches were inactive there was even a superfluity; but now these other churches are taking back their own. The congregation has also been depleted to some extent, and the church is no longer overcrowded; but it is still practically full. The people are mainly well-to-do, and less is said about 'indifference.' 'There is of course much of it, but there is a particular keenness shown on religious questions.' Among the middle-class people dwelling along the hill side, which extends from Plumstead to Blackheath, and upon which this church stands, the feeling is strongly Protestant and Evangelical and Undenominational in character; 'not so much church or chapel as an Exeter Hall kind of religion.' They are intensely interested in 'conversion,' and delight in the soul-stirring effects of 'ten-day missions,' with professional evangelists. To them 'conversion is apt to become both Alpha and Omega instead of Alpha only.' The efforts of the congregation go out in Ladies' Zenana working parties and other missionary enterprise. By all this the working classes, of whom the proportion is considerable amongst the population, are practically uninterested and untouched; but,

as regards the class concerned, it is a successful church.

In St. Margaret's parish there is a large and old-established Wesleyan Church which does not show much life, and the Unitarians and Brethren are also represented. In All Saints' the Bible Christians have a church which may perhaps seem less successful than it really is, because the building is rather large for its congregation, and the Primitive Methodists here, whose chapel is quite small, have a more flourishing appearance.

St. Mark's and the Ascension are mission districts detached from the old mother parish of St. Nicholas, and are struggling with many difficulties. St. Mark's is a basement church, the flat roof of which is intended to be the floor of the edifice that is yet to build. The missioner is a remarkable man, who strives to catch the working classes in a net of which High Church principles and practices, Socialist sentiments, pulpit eloquence, and personal influence, form the meshes. Except for children and a few regular retainers his church is empty on Sunday morning, but in the evening it is crowded with the most distinctly popular audience to be found in this district. It is an *audience* and not as yet a congregation; though in time it may perhaps become one. There is attached to this church a fair-sized working men's club which, as usual, does not lead to churchgoing. A special Sunday afternoon club was established, resulting in the gathering together of one or two hundred rough lads, but the entertainment which attracted them, and was intended to lead them eventually to the church, was disapproved by the ruridecanal conference, and the scheme has had to be dropped. Here we have a church which does indeed break new ground, but as to which it is difficult to say whether the religious influence exerted is of any great value. It is peculiar in that it attracts

and collects the less well-to-do and less socially respectable of the working classes who constitute the parishioners.

The Ascension district, as a piece of Church work, is still more incomplete. Here, too, the effort is to catch the elusive working man. The 'hook is baited in various ways,' and, as in fishing, there 'are many disappointments.' 'The men take a lot of winning.' They are 'friendly, but patronising;' 'very pleased to see you;' 'will come some day,—but don't.' Nevertheless the schoolroom church on the northern verge of the mission district is reported to be well filled on Sunday evening. On Sunday morning it is of course empty. To the south new houses are springing up rapidly, and the site of the new church now in the open fields will soon be surrounded by dwellings.

Finally we come to the remains of the ancient parish of St. Nicholas, with its old—partly very old—church, having a Jacobean red brick tower of exceeding beauty, and a churchyard full of headstones old and new. Here, just beyond the tramway terminus, London ends, and the footpath which passes amongst the tombs leads out into the open ridge-wrought fields of Kent. Look East or North, there is no house nor sign of habitation to be seen. With a little effort of imagination London is forgotten, and we hear the bell and join the evening service as at some village church. The edifice inside is small and old-fashioned, and of quaint shape; the reception by the verger very courteous, and the attendance just such as village streets might supply; while the arrangements of the service are at least a century behind the present age. If there is no failure here, it is because nothing new is ever attempted. This is the parish of King Log.

The population is still large, and is rapidly increasing. In addition to the mission district already described,

there is another (St. Paul's), of which an active curate has the sole management. It has a small church of its own, set down and almost lost amongst the new streets near the railway. Great is the contrast! The building itself might be a Methodist chapel, so devoid is it of any architectural effect, but within there is a full choir of men and boys dressed in white surplices, and everything else that is considered right and requisite for the service of God according to the most modern ideas. The little place fills for the evening service with poor folk, mostly women. If there be failure here—if, for instance, the men are seldom persuaded to come, at least one is convinced that it is not for want of trying.

West of St. Nicholas, between it and Holy Trinity, Woolwich, lies St. John's, Plumstead, the only exponent of High Church principles in this neighbourhood, with priest, assistant priest, two Grey Ladies, sixteen visitors and twenty-five Sunday school teachers as its parochial staff. The visitors act mainly as collectors. The church is rather empty on Sunday morning, and looks desolate, but its beautiful long red brick interior lights up well, and a good congregation gathers there at night. It consists mostly of young women in smart attire, but is drawn, I think, from the people.

The Roman Catholic population in Plumstead is considerably smaller than in Woolwich, numbering only a little over one thousand. But their small church is successful in its way. It is an unpretentious structure, to the internal fitting and decoration of which some members of the congregation for months gave their time and work in the evening after the Arsenal closed.

In the same vicinity, mostly in St. Nicholas' parish, but nearer to St. John's Church, there are several fairly successful chapels. One, belonging to the Baptists, has a congregation that, with the exception of a few shopkeepers, is composed entirely of working men. They

are intensely religious and steadfast as Church workers. So much earnestness, their pastor says, he never met till he came here. His remarks on the art of winning and holding a congregation such as his, strike me as of general application and interest, and will show how he has succeeded in filling a formerly empty church.

Preaching he makes his main business. 'You will never' (he says) 'get the working man to church except through preaching. He is not hostile to religious worship, but indifferent. To attract you must interest, to interest you must speak. Worship is the real reason for coming to church, but the working man cannot worship; he does not know how to and must be taught. He can and does learn only from the pulpit. Therefore you must preach. What is the essential follows after. But in preaching you have to be careful not to excite, or a reaction will follow and undo later the immediate good.'

In this church they seek no stimulus from outside. If the minister is unable to be there himself some member of the congregation occupies his place. Among these people what the world calls pleasures are disapproved; theatres and music-halls are shunned. Church work is their interest, and marketing on Saturday their amusement.

The Primitive Methodists hard by are equally earnest and equally successful. Their commodious chapel is well filled and the staff of their workers includes sixty Sunday school teachers. The children are those of their own members, some coming from a distance—for there is a movement among them towards the higher ground by the Common—with others from the immediate neighbourhood. The Brethren, too, have a chapel near here and another higher up on the Common, where building is proceeding apace, and the Peculiar People have one or two chapels.

Baptists, Primitives and Brethren, all draw their

adherents from the strongly religious substratum that is as noticeable a fact in English working-class life as is the superstructure of indifference. With the religious-minded there is some shifting about as taste or tradition may lead, but, finally, they assort themselves among the various churches and chapels. All the denominations succeed in bringing together fair evening congregations, but 'if every church and chapel were full the mass of the population would remain untouched.'

The limitations of this religious world are even more manifest with the undenominational missions, of which there are several here. Their workers are drawn from the various Christian bodies. The outsiders who can be interested are few and eagerly competed for.

In all these missions the 'Soldier Christian' and the 'Christian Soldier' play important parts, and it may be in connection with this spirit that the Salvation Army seems to be more successful here than in many parts of London, but it, too, is subject to the same limitations.

Linked with Woolwich for municipal and registration purposes is North Woolwich, an anomalous area on the north bank of the Thames. It contains about three thousand inhabitants, and forms part of the parish of St. John the Evangelist, which is in the diocese of St. Alban's. The people are entirely working class, finding their employment in the docks and numerous factories of Silvertown. Their homes are rather poorly built two-storeyed houses wedged in between the Thames and the Royal Albert Dock. A few shops relieve the dreariness of the streets, but most of the women shop in Woolwich, crossing by the free ferry. On the other hand there is, at this point, an excellent public garden, the gift of the London County Council, with an extensive river frontage, much frequented by the people of Woolwich as well as of Silvertown.

Besides the church, which has its schools, there is a chapel and a small mission in the district, while just beyond its borders are several chapels.

§ 5

VARIOUS OPINIONS

It may serve to strengthen what I have said if I add some extracts from the remarks made by the clergy and ministers of religion on the people they are trying to serve; not as to their particular flocks, but as to the population generally.

One of the ablest of the Church of England clergy is convinced that the only advance lies in concentration. Each church must endeavour to obtain a firm hold of a few. This, he adds, is the chief use of the missions, which, though they have no permanent effect on the outsiders, increase greatly the fervour of the inner band of communicants who may 'spread the light;' for there is, he says, speaking generally, almost complete indifference to religion; and, he concludes, that, as far as the mass of people is concerned, 'you can't and won't get them to church.'

Another, while confirming this, attributes the apathy mainly, not to atheism, but to sin; not, as he said, 'to grave sin,' but rather to the general tendency to a low moral standard.

A prominent Congregationalist, referring to the complete failure of the churches to touch the great mass of the people, says: 'Such new members as join are not conversions, but the children of Christian people,' and adds that those churches which devote themselves incessantly to running missions gain indeed a constant stream of newcomers, but suffer a propor-

tional leakage, and that their ministers are maintained in good heart only by 'invincible optimism.' Ask, he says, the ministers of the churches and chapels in the districts beyond Woolwich and Plumstead, towards Erith and Dartford, where a huge working-class population is springing up, whether this growth adds to their congregations, and the reply will be, 'No, not one;' and he notes, as a symptom of the prevailing feeling, that in the Arsenal a religious man is a marked man, for setting up to be better than others. Nevertheless he is not without an optimism of his own, believing that to evangelize the masses in the churches as they stand would not be impossible if the services were less formal and dull and sermons less conventional. His congregation (ultra-respectable middle-class) prefer, however, to stick to the old paths, and would rather leave the masses to the missions. This minister alluded in very strong terms to the low moral tone of the Arsenal workers, and he is corroborated by another quite unbiassed witness who says that both the moral tone and religious attitude of many of the men leave much to be desired.

From one of the Catholic priests, a far from harsh judging man, we hear a similar account of the tone of the Arsenal, as making both for immorality and infidelity. But still, taking the district as a whole, he gives it a very good name for independence of character, steadiness, regularity and quiet behaviour. He also spoke well of the general capacity of the inhabitants, repeating a local saying, 'There are no fools in Woolwich.' Another of the same community speaks of his flock as not remarkable observers of the laws of the Church, but as being all regularly employed and earning good wages; with no outcasts or utterly poor.

I should be sorry to endorse any sweeping indictment of the Arsenal and the men employed there.

The tone must vary from shop to shop; the men will be of all characters—some excellent in every way and some blackguards; careful men and good co-operators as well as thoughtless spendthrifts; and ardent Christians as well as those who are without any religious faith; but all agree in stating that in a general way this aggregation of men exercises an anti-religious influence, and this is probably true.

Thus we are told by one who speaks with experience that the Arsenal people as a whole, and the rest of the working class with them, are even more indifferent and difficult to touch than is most places. This comes from a parish which admittedly contains the pick of these men, and where the prevailing note is great prosperity and well-being. The indifference is partly attributed to past neglect on the part of the Church and partly to 'a strong anti-religious spirit in the Arsenal.' It is bad form, we are told, even to nod to a parson in the street. A club for men started at the vicarage failed because 'they disliked to be seen entering its gates.' Yet this witness is, certainly as regards the clergy of the Church of England, the most successful in his parish work of all those we have seen. It is noteworthy that in this neighbourhood generally the social undertakings of the Church are on a small scale; designed rather for those that are already interested than for the purpose of recruiting. It is recognised that in these matters the Church cannot pretend to rival the Polytechnic. We learn, moreover, that the arrangements for social and educational recreation at the Arsenal are excellent and complete. All of which gives much cause for reflection, as showing how small is the space occupied by religion.

A Baptist, who is himself not altogether unsuccessful, remarks that although there are some who claim to see signs of improvement and revival, he must confess that he cannot see them himself. He never

knew a district where the indifference was so great, and the reason he assigns is the sense of comfort and security enjoyed.

'I pray that some great calamity may not befall us as a judgment for our ungodliness,' said one of the most earnest of the Evangelicals after a reference to the 'respectable indifference' to religion of a large proportion of his parishioners. He thinks there is 'too little fear of God, too much stress laid on His mercy and forgiveness.' Sweet, it is said, are the uses of adversity. Prosperity, perchance, may carry a curse.

The story of the Bible Christian Church in All Saints' parish is of interest. It had had a successful past in Woolwich, but the class of people on whom it depended moved away and it was left deserted. Thereupon an effort was made, a site was found, and a beautiful church built in the new and prosperous district 'on the hill;' but success did not come. The present minister, who is a man of vigour, lays aside as useless the modern methods for sugaring religion and pursues his aim slowly, but it may be hoped surely, on spiritual lines. He admits that 'Pleasant Sunday Afternoon' services do not reach the class aimed at. He even thinks that missions do more harm than good to the cause of religion, merely affording the 'opportunity for a spiritual debauch' to those given that way; while Saturday concerts, instead of drawing in the 'public-house and drinking lot,' attract mainly church and chapel-goers; 'serving only to feed' (and here I think he is rather hard on the people) 'that inordinate love of pleasure which is the greatest hindrance to religious work,' and by late hours on Saturday, likely to 'unfit them for their Sunday duties.'

Amongst the ministers who meet at the 'fraternal' (a clerical breakfast party) there is an idea that Woolwich is worse than other places in respect of

religious indifference. From every denomination we have the same story: 'The men are intelligent, but atheism and indifference affect everything.' They 'observe all the decencies of life, but are not religiously inclined.' 'Fairly moral and respectable, but indifferent largely to spiritual things.' 'Though impervious to religion the people are in the main respectable as well as prosperous.' It is 'an excellent marrying district;' so much so that girls who go into service dislike to leave the neighbourhood.

Nor is it certain that those whom the churches attract are the best possible specimens of humanity. The vicar of one of the parishes is outspoken as to this. He notes the tendency to be 'sawneys' and 'namby pamby' among the members of the Y.M.C.A. and young church-members generally; and feels strongly the need of more manliness in religion. The apathy and selfishness of professing Christians is also freely denounced; for instance, in regard to temperance work, it is noted that although there is much fervour of expression, no practical action is taken.

But, on the other side, I should be wrong were I to omit reference to the splendid character for devoted work given by the clergy and ministers of all denominations here, as elsewhere, to those who support them. Even more here than in other localities, the work of the Church is the life of the congregation, providing constant occupation for its members and becoming the chief interest in many of their lives.

The practical limitation of *clientèle* within which the Churches work, is shown by the fact that the Evangelical character of the surrounding churches weakens Nonconformity wherever it occurs, though it may help a High Church neighbour, and by the generally accepted statement that at the end 'only a fringe of the population is touched at all.' As another remarkable illustration of these limits, we hear of

the senior members of a Church of England Bible-class being 'very steady men,' who 'won't be confirmed' and who, without exception, attend the service at Mr. Wilson's tabernacle.

Wherever in this district there is at this time actual poverty, there is also degradation; for only the degraded are poor. Upon this combination of poverty and degradation religion fails to make any impression. Many ways are tried, but none succeed. Mission or other special services do not attract the class at which they are aimed; or only do so in one or two instances by lavish charity when the 'constant cases of blessing and conversion' must be regarded with suspicion.

§ 6

SOCIAL INFLUENCES

The Woolwich Polytechnic is an important institution. It was started under the auspices of Mr. Quintin Hogg largely as a Young Men's Christian Institute, and still carries that name as a second title. Under these conditions its scope became rather narrow and it fell into financial difficulties from which it was saved by development of its educational side. The monetary obstacles being thus overcome, there has been a fresh movement in the social and religious direction, of which the most definite undertaking is a men's own service on Sunday afternoon, of a distinctly religious character, largely attended by respectable working men. But it is as an institution for 'the promotion of industrial skill, general knowledge, health and well-being,' that the Polytechnic principally plays and appears to be destined to play, its part at Woolwich. The particulars of the

science and other classes of the Institute itself fill a small volume. And there is besides a Technical and Commercial day school for boys and girls.

The curriculum provided by the Polytechnic, in which physical science preponderates, is very comprehensive and many developments are contemplated. Still the always difficult task of attracting artisans and mechanics in large numbers has not been overcome, and most of the students come from the class above. That the great body of the Arsenal men hold aloof may be partly explained by the prevalence of overtime, but still more perhaps by the normal disinclination of young men of the artisan class to spend their leisure in the effort to secure mental or technical advancement. The courses are open to old as well as young, but about twenty is the usual age for students ; one-sixth of them are women.

The excellent arrangements for social and educational recreation at the Arsenal itself have been already referred to. Its examinations for boys, and the certainty of good industrial training as well as good wages to follow, provide, we are told, a great mental stimulus for those employed there. The friendly witness who mentions this says also that the tone of the place is not particularly bad now, but admits that at times it has had a very bad name for swearing and blackguardism, and thinks the authorities might be more careful in these respects than they are. Evidently it is a case in which a good and bad influence may run side by side. As to vice and evil talk it must be difficult for the authorities to do much in the way of restraint ; but as to drink, irregularity of attendance due to this cause leads to dismissal, and we hear that some thirty men are discharged every week on that account. Gambling and betting also are forbidden, and it is said some improvement has been effected ; but the betting agents meet the men outside in the dinner hour.

On the marshes to the east of the Arsenal is a football ground with grand stand, and there have at times (before the war no doubt) been as many as twenty-five thousand onlookers on a Saturday afternoon. Boys pay 3*d* and men 6*d* or 1*s*. The marshes afford space for other sports unconnected with the Arsenal, such as whippet racing and pigeon shooting; and also for gipsy encampments of vans and small brown tents. It is real fen country, with deep dykes at each side of the roads and broad green fields divided by ditches full of wild flowers. At the extreme north are the Arsenal rifle butts and the ground for the trials of big guns, the reverberations of which shake and even break the windows of Woolwich.

Of the consequences on health and habits of the amount of overtime worked lately we have heard much. The men become sick and worn out, and it appears probable that little good comes of the extra money thus earned. At any rate, the Churches complain that they see none of it. Indeed, they receive less, for attendance at church is interfered with and the collections suffer. The wives make much the same complaint, and for the same reason; the home is interfered with. More drink is an almost certain outcome of physical exhaustion, and low forms of pleasure are a natural relief from the strain. The wife of an office-bearer of the United Methodist Free Church, whose husband works at the Arsenal, gave us an extraordinary account of the extent to which overtime had been carried in his department. In one spell of fourteen weeks he had only one Sunday off, and in place of forty-eight hours he actually worked as much as a hundred and four per week, so that, including the overtime allowance, he earned three times the amount of his ordinary wages. But the strain had been too great. It got on his nerves, and he had to be exempted by doctor's certificate. 'Plenty of money?—yes—but

bother the money; health is best,' said his faithful wife. It is not to be supposed that in this case the money did not come home or that the Church suffered except by the loss of service. That all the extra earnings made are not squandered is proved by the increased amounts put into various thrift agencies and by the extensive buying of houses.

One of the results of employment at the Arsenal (and it will apply to the Dockyard also) is said to be a narrowing of the class point of view. It is not, says our informant, that the men become Socialists, but that they become selfish as a result of employment by the State. The remark comes from a Church of England parson, probably a Conservative; but we get the same idea from a Unitarian minister who is undoubtedly a Radical, and who complains, as a politician, that the men of the Arsenal are Conservatives because they believe that their employment will be best under a Conservative government. Some narrowing of the class point of view may possibly arise from the fact that those engaged are all employees; all men and no masters. There can be nothing quite equivalent to that representation of the master's interest which is found amongst the responsible foremen and heads of departments in private, profit-earning, concerns, even when these are on the largest scale.

The effect of the abundant work and the high pay offered is shown by the impossibility of obtaining labour for gardening, window cleaning, &c., and at the schools in the eagerness of the boys to escape at the earliest possible moment.

As to thrift, amid all this prosperity, we have a short cut to a conclusion in the phrase, 'Many are thrifty, the rest drink.' But there are some who say that thrift is carried almost to the extent of meanness. Here and there we have complaints from the chapels of lack of support from their members, with this

explanation. In one case, the member had transferred his allegiance to a mission where religion could be had cheap. We are told that a getting and grasping spirit prevails; that the acquisition of property is the dominant idea in Woolwich, and the sole object of life seemingly to buy a house. We hear also that the tendency among those who are best off is to make little show and live below their incomes.

To whatever extent the money may be saved, or in whatever way it may be spent, at present (1900) all have plenty. 'A prosperous town of prosperous artisans and working men,' said one of the Catholic priests. 'Yet,' said another of them, 'there is not a week between any one of us and the workhouse; and we all say it and laugh.' But that there ought to be no poor is only what everyone says. 'The people are all young, and if they are poor it is not for want of money, but of knowledge how to spend it.' It is noteworthy with what success district visitors can collect savings which would probably be spent if the visitor were not expected.

With regard to drink, what is commonly reported is that, though much is taken, it is with decreasing effect. There is less drunkenness. 'They only get three parts drunk.' 'Hundreds of men spend 10*s* a week on drink who are seldom, if ever, drunk.' 'There is no drunkenness—more is consumed, but it is not considered the thing to get drunk,'—such are the opinions, and the public-houses are reported as well conducted.

The clubs have a far worse reputation. Strong language is used regarding them, which may be exaggerated, but cannot be disregarded. 'They may be called Conservative or Radical, the names are blinds; the results are the same.'

In this district we hear little of women drinking, and in this connection it is to be remarked that, even

amongst those that are poor, it is unusual for the wives to work. Nor is there any local employment for girls beyond domestic service, which often only means home work or assisting a neighbour, although there is also some demand for servants from the houses of the neighbouring rich. The rising standard of demand is indicated by the requirement, in the case of a young general servant mentioned to us, of 'an extra evening's liberty in order to continue piano lessons.' The daughters of well-to-do artisans find employment for the most part in the City as shop assistants, or clerks or waitresses, and go to their work by train, as do many of the boys also.

We have said it is a great marrying district. To this career young women naturally look forward, and we may add that the moral standard among them is high. We hear little of ante-nuptial relations, and if there are some men and women living together unmarried it is because of the embarrassment of a pre-existing legal tie. Large families are usual. An old Wesleyan local preacher said he had never seen so many children as there are here.

Vice is professional. The soldiers are, as always, a difficulty. The Common at night is a scene of much disorder, which it is found very difficult to check. On the other hand, very few of the men can be allowed to marry, and if married 'off the strength' their wives lead wretched lives. One of the streets near the barracks is let in rooms to these poor women.

There has, however, been great improvement amongst the soldiers, both as to drink and vice, due to the care and consideration shown by the commanding officers for the general welfare of the men, in response to a movement emanating from headquarters. 'It was very different twenty years ago, when things went on that are almost incredible now.'

§ 7

LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ETC.

We have already described Charlton inland as far as Kidbrooke and the Common, and along the river side as far as the Dockyard. The town of Woolwich is remarkable for broad streets, sudden hills, and unexpected turnings; and this character is continued into Plumstead, which consists of rapidly rising ground interspersed with ravines. The great natural beauties of the situation have been thrown away, and the Common, which might have been made into an exquisite park, has been irretrievably ruined. Local government has much to answer for in the past; forethought has been wanting; general and permanent advantage has been sacrificed to immediate private profit, and the place has been spoilt for ever.

The streets of Plumstead are dull; the houses are ugly, two-storeyed erections of yellow brick, for the most part new. In the daytime the roadways are deserted, except when the children tumble out of school, leaving a litter of small paper bags which once held pennyworths of sweets or fruit, or when a straggling crowd of men hurry through on their way to or from home during the dinner hour. The house doors are shut, the windows screened with well ordered curtains. Everything seems asleep. The women are up and doubtless busy, but they are at work within, or in the yards or small gardens behind. No one is seen in front, and the door shuts behind father or child returning home. There is no life in the street; not even a tallyman goes his round, for they find no room to live in co-operative Plumstead. At night, unless it be Saturday night and the High Street, all is dull and dark, except that men sit with pipe in mouth on their doorstep, and from the parlour may be heard the sound of a piano. All this would

be endurable, and might even be regarded as idyllic, if only the streets led up to a beautiful park, such as the Common land ought to have become. Something might still be done. Part of the Common remains, and would repay care. At any rate, the future may be safeguarded. Further to the east this has been done by the acquisition by the London County Council of Bostall Wood, a real country wood of fir-trees and rough plantations, where wild flowers grow, already needing police protection.

This wood, and Bostall Heath beyond, are both within the metropolitan boundary, but as to houses London practically ends at Wickham Lane, in the valley which lies to the eastward of the Common. This will soon be built upon, but is to-day occupied by market gardens; and the houses that stand in the lane set forth badly-written notices inviting wayfarers to the enjoyment of winkles, watercress, eggs, and cake. To the south, from Eltham Common eastward, lie other woods and fields; and in this direction, as London extends, it is to be hoped that there will be more forethought given to the retention of open spaces and natural beauty than has been the case in the past.

It is perhaps mainly to the bad service of trains, and the failure to extend tramways across Blackheath, that we owe the existence of these open fields and woods to-day; and it is very clear that we cannot prudently advance in the one direction without considering what will be spoilt as well as what is brought into use; and without safeguarding, for extending London, as much grass and trees and air as possible.

Meanwhile the train service as it exists is a grievous inconvenience to the existing population. Some twelve miles of distance lies between Woolwich and Central London, and after allowing themselves about forty minutes, the infrequent trains are usually (but most irregularly) behind time; it may be ten, twenty, thirty

or even forty minutes. Improvement is promised, and it is none too soon.

The Vestries of Woolwich and Plumstead have recently been united as one borough, with the addition of Eltham. When our inquiry was made local administration was still in the hands of the Vestries. As to both 'a low moral tone' was complained of, the work being subject, it was said, to 'petty influences,' but the Progressives were strong, especially at Plumstead. In the matter of housing the troubles at Woolwich are those of old buildings and crowding, and at Plumstead of new and shoddy work and rapid extension—of houses let before they are begun, and occupied before they are dry. Otherwise conditions vary mainly with the nature of the soil and the level of the ground. Those who move into better quarters move to some higher part of the neighbourhood. On all this much has already been said. Tubercular disease, attributed to the dampness of the houses, is prevalent in some parts, but the upper regions have an excellent character. Rents are rising everywhere. Our Woolwich reports say: 'Great crowding, rents very high; houses almost impossible to obtain.' 'Rents inordinately high; great demand for houses.' 'House rent too high for working men.' Several instances of overcrowding are given; but the people, if well enough off, refuse to be crowded. Rents are rising, too, in Plumstead, with the difficulty of obtaining houses, but so far there is little or no crowding.

There are baths, washhouses, and electric lighting works. The baths are boasted of as being the best in London, and the water supplied by the Woolwich water-works is excellent. The roads, at any rate in the higher portions of Woolwich and in Plumstead, are broad, clean and well kept.

Woolwich Poor Law Union includes Plumstead,

Kidbrooke and Charlton. As to the Guardians, we are told that many of them take real interest in their charges, but the desire for better conditions is controlled by the necessity of keeping rates down. A gradual improvement does, however, result. The amount of out-relief is kept within bounds, being only given when it can be supplemented from other sources, so as to provide a sufficient income. But the policy is not uniformly carried out, depending largely on the relieving officers. As to the sick, the infirmary is warmly praised; as to children, as many as possible are boarded out, and new schools on the block system are being built. Classification of the inmates of the workhouse has been attempted; and some of the able-bodied have been sent at the Guardians' expense to the Salvation Army labour colony. If they come back they are prosecuted. On the whole the administration of the poor law is active, and the policy progressive.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES. Map R. (Vol. V., Part I., Chapter III.).

Woolwich and Plumstead.

General Character.—The map comprises the districts of Woolwich and Plumstead. The general character is fairly comfortable working class, with patches of poverty, and one large 'black' area lying immediately west of the Royal Arsenal. East of Woolwich Common the predominance of the pink classes is strongly marked. Servants are kept in the main shopping streets, and in those tenanted by officers' wives; the 'pink barred with red' again denotes lodging-house streets where the clerks and higher employees at the Arsenal live. The barracks and the Royal Arsenal are the controlling factors of Woolwich life. Young families, chiefly those of Arsenal employees, are especially noticeable in Plumstead. Employers and those who keep servants are the exception. The population of Woolwich is far greater than would appear from the map, because the scheme of colouring adopted does not include the soldiers in barracks.

Poverty Areas.—There is new poverty connected with rough labour at the cable works on the low ground lying west of the Royal Dockyard. For the rest, poverty occurs in small, long-established patches in Old Woolwich, caused by the presence of labourers and the loafers attendant on garrison life. The large black patch off the west side of the Arsenal is the 'Dust-hole' (*vide* p. 90). Off the south-east side of Woolwich Common is garrison poverty and vice. Further East in Plumstead on the low ground off the north side of the Plumstead road, is new Irish labouring poverty and another small patch off the south side of the Common is connected with market-garden labour. The 'purple' streets in Plumstead generally mark the homes of labourers employed at the Arsenal. Prosperity here is intimately bound up with the condition of arsenal work.

Employments.—The Royal Arsenal, the cable works, and the Royal Dockyard (now used as War Department Stores) are the chief centres of employment. There are also a very large number of men in the building trades, new houses being features both of Woolwich and Plumstead, and there is some riverside work. For women there is very little factory work, only a shirt factory and a factory for lawn-tennis balls being mentioned. A large number of men work in the factories of North Woolwich and Silvertown, crossing the Thames by the Free Ferry.

Housing and Rents.—The general type of house in Woolwich and Plumstead is two-storeyed, with a frontage of 14 to 16 ft., built of yellow brick with slate roof, to accommodate two families. In Woolwich houses are generally older than in Plumstead, and more often built in the first instance for one family. In spite of much building, there is great demand for house room; rents have risen, and are still rising; there is very little crowding; the fairly comfortable artisan in this district refuses to be crowded. Backyards and gardens in new houses are very small; the tendency of the day is to depend more and more upon public open spaces as playgrounds.

New houses for the class that may keep a servant were building (1900), and were sold as soon as built for £380 on a ninety-nine years' lease. New houses for artisans, with six rooms and a washhouse, fetch 14*s* 6*d*, being a rise of 3*s* or 4*s* per week on the rents asked three years previously. In the 'Dust-hole' furnished rooms are let at 5*s* per week, or 9*d* per night.

Markets.—The great shopping streets are Powis Street, Hare Street, Wellington Street, Plumstead Road, and Plumstead High Street. Street markets are held in Powis Street, Beresford Square—opposite the main entrance of the Arsenal, and Plumstead High Street.

Some prices in Beresford Square.—Bread, $4\frac{1}{2}d$ the quartern loaf; scrag of mutton, $2\frac{1}{2}d$ per lb., chops, $4\frac{1}{2}d$ and $5\frac{1}{2}d$ (good); cod and hake, $3d$ per lb.; red currants, $2d$ per lb., black currants, $5d$ per lb., gooseberries, $2d$ per pint, cherries, tomatoes, plums, all $3d$ per lb. (July, 1902).

The Co-operative Society (*vide* p. 97) is a great force in Woolwich and Plumstead, and has large shops in Powis Street and Lakedale Road.

Public-houses.—Public-houses and beerhouses are thickest in old Woolwich between the Arsenal and the Dockyard. Plumstead has its fair share of houses as far East as Griffin Road; they are rare in the newer parts. Overtime and high earnings of Arsenal men, coupled with the constant incoming and outgoing of troops, are said to have doubled the income of every public-house in Woolwich during the Boer War. Tea-houses, with notices of 'eggs and cake,' 'winkles and watercress,' in their windows, are common in Wickham Lane, for the accommodation of picnic parties to Bostall Woods.

Places of Amusement.—There are two theatres in Woolwich and a small music-hall in Plumstead. Of an evening the endless streets of two-storeyed houses in Plumstead are very dark and dull.

The Arsenal football ground off the Griffin manor way on the east side of the Arsenal is a place of popular resort. There is also a theatre in the barracks.

Open Spaces.—There is plenty of open space in Woolwich and Plumstead. On the west, there is Maryon Park (public) and Charlton Park (private), together with some unbuilt low ground off the west side of the Dockyard; on the south are Woolwich and Plumstead Commons; on the west, the magnificent Bostall Heath and Woods belonging to the L.C.C., and the fen-like Plumstead marshes; whilst on the north is the river, but the latter is for the most part shut in by high walls.

Health is good on the whole. Drainage on the low ground north of Woolwich Road and Plumstead Road is difficult, and the new houses are badly built, and tenanted by a poor class; illness, as a consequence, is common; but on the high ground south of these roads building is very fair, drainage efficient, tenants of comfortable class, and health good.

There is a narrow strip of chalk on the low ground west of the Dockyard, and again in the valley west of Bostall Wood. The marshes north of Woolwich and Plumstead Roads are of damp clayey soil; the high ground, with the exception of some gravel on Shooter's Hill, is of pebble beds, sand and loam, more or less permeable to water, which changes to stiff London clay on a line with the southern half of Woolwich Common.

Changes of Population.—Owing to the extra work necessitated by the Boer War (1899-1902), a large number of men came into the district; there resulted a great demand for house room. The incomers were nearly all young men; many were married men with increasing families. The expansion took place East and South towards Bostall Wood and Plumstead Common. In Old Woolwich some of the slums have been demolished, notably the courts behind the west side of Beresford Street; a number of bad characters from these places have moved to the blue and black streets off the east side of Woolwich Common. Each year Woolwich tends to become more and more entirely working class. It is one of the few districts in London where the workman has made the sides and crests of steep hills his own.

Means of Locomotion.—The South-Eastern Railway runs across the low ground at the north of the map; the train service is so bad that

workmen at the Arsenal hesitate to live even one station distant at Abbey Wood. (*Vide* p. 131.) Horse tramways give a slow means of communication along Albion and Plumstead Roads between Greenwich and the foot of Bostall Hill. What is wanted:—A quicker and more punctual train service; electric instead of horse trams, and new lines of trams running South from Woolwich Arsenal to Eltham, with branches on the East along Nightingale Lane and Plumstead Common Road to Wickham Lane, proceeding thence to East Wickham and up Shooter's Hill to Welling and Bexley Heath. On the West, branches are required along Charlton Road and along Shooter's Hill Road and the Dover Road to Inner London.

PLACES OF WORSHIP.

List of Parish Churches situated in the district described in Chapter III. (Part I.), with other PLACES OF WORSHIP grouped in their ecclesiastical parishes.

All Saints, Shooter's Hill.
All Saints' Miss., Herbert Rd.
Prim. Meth. Chapel, Eglington Road.
Bible Chris. Ch., Herbert Rd.

Holy Trinity, New Charlton.
Miss. of Good Shepherd, Bettesfield Rd.
Maryon Institute, East St.
Miss. Hall (Brethren), Woolwich Rd.
Salv. Army Bar., Woolwich Rd.

Holy Trinity, Woolwich.
St. Saviour's Miss., Rope Yard Rails.
Woolwich Tabernacle (Bapt.), Beresford St.
Salv. Army Barracks, Beresford Rd.

St. James, Burrage Road.
Bapt. Ch., Conduit Rd.
St. Andrew's Presb. Ch., Anglesea Rd.
U. Meth. Free Ch., Crescent Rd.

St. James, Kidbrooke.
St. James's Miss. House, Shooter's Hill.
St. Germain's Ch., St. Germain's Place.
Bapt. Ch., Old Dover Rd.

St. John, North Woolwich.
Silvertown Cong. Ch., Albert Rd.
People's Hall, Francis St.

St. John, Woolwich.
St. John's Miss., Ritter St.
Carmel Bapt. Ch., Anglesea Rd.
Presb. Ch., New Rd.
Gospel Hall (Brethren), Nightingale Vale.
Brethren's Hall, Anglesea Rd.
St. Peter's (R. C.), New Rd.

St. John Baptist, Plumstead.
Plumstead Tabernacle (Bapt.), Maxey Rd.
Prim. Meth. Chapel, Glyndon Rd.
Salv. Army Hall, Villas Rd.
Inverness Hall (Brethren), Inverness Place.
Richmond Hall (Brethren), Vicarage Rd.

St. Luke, Charlton.

St. Margaret, Plumstead.
Wesl. Ch., Plumstead Com. Rd.
Unitarian Ch., Plumstead Common Rd.
Brethren's Miss. Rm., Plum. Lne.

St. Mark, Plumstead.
Union Chapel, Park Rd.
Cage Lane Miss., Lakedale Rd.
Peculiar People's Ch., Brewery Rd.

St. Mary, Woolwich.
St. Martin's Miss., Back Lane.
St. George's Garrison Ch., New Rd.
Cong. Ch., Rectory Place.
Welsh Cong. Ch., Parson's Hill.
Enon Bapt. Ch., High St.
Wesl. Ch., William St.
Union Chapel (Prim. Meth.), Sun St.

St. Michael, Blackheath Pk.
St. Michael's Miss., Blackheath Park Mews.
Alexandra Hall (Brethren), Bennett Pk.
Bennett Park Hall (Brethren), Bennett Pk.
Our Lady Help of Christians (R. C.), Cresswell Park.

St. Michael, Woolwich.
St. Faith's Miss. Room, Martyr's Passage.
Cong. Miss., Lower Pellipar Rd.

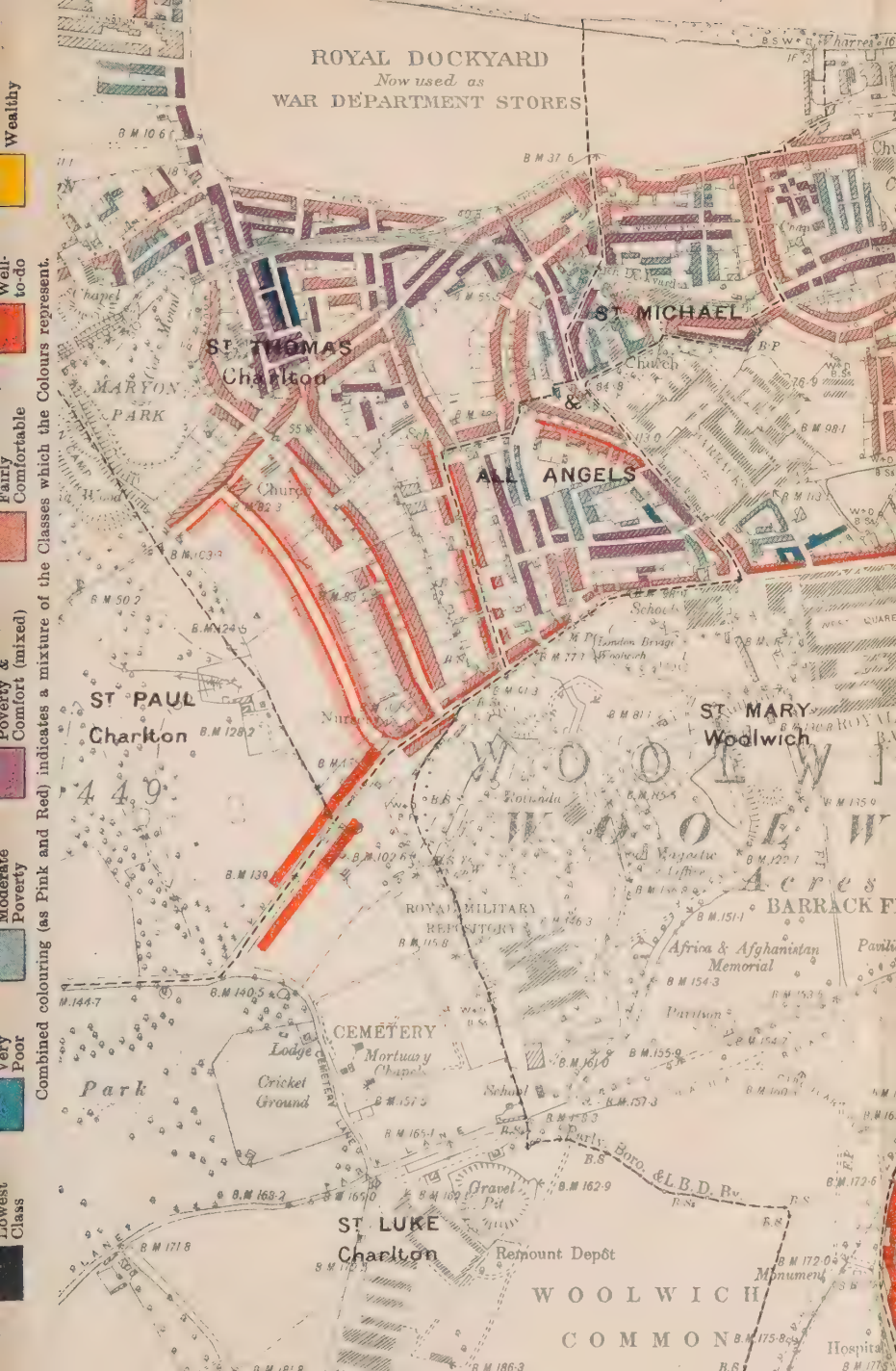
St. Nicholas, Plumstead.
St. Paul's Miss. Ch., Glenside Rd.
Cong. Ch., Viewland Rd.
Bapt. Ch., Station Rd.
Wesl. Ch., High St.
Miss. Hall (Brethren), King's Highway.
Plumstead Gospel Miss., Rippolson Rd.

St. Paul, Charlton.
St. Paul's Parish Room, Delafield Rd.
Sundorne Miss., Swallowfield Rd.

St. Paul, Plumstead.
Salv. Army Hall, 26, High St.
St. Patrick (R. C.), Conway Rd.

St. Thomas, Charlton.
Bapt. Ch., Samuel St.
Bapt. Ch., Sand Street.
Charlton Vale Wesl. Ch., Woolwich Rd.
Gospel Hall (Brethren), Prospect Place.

The Ascension, Plumstead.
Wesl. Miss., Sutcliffe Rd.
Slade Miss., The Slade.


ROYAL DOCKYARD
Now used as
WAR DEPARTMENT STORES
ST MICHAEL
&
ALL ANGELS
ST THOMAS
Charlton
MARYON
PARK
ST PAUL
Charlton
ST MARY
Woolwich
449
Acres
BARRACK F
ROYAL MILITARY
REPOSITORY
Africa & Afghanistan
Memorial
CEMETERY
Lodge
Mortuary
Chapels
Park
Cricket
Ground
CEMETERY
LANE
Parly. Boro. & L.B.D. Rw
Gravel
Pit
ST LUKE
Charlton
Remount Depôt
WOOLWICH
COMMON
Monument
Hospital
Wealthy
Well-to-do
Fairly Comfortable
Poverty & Comfort (mixed)
Moderate Poverty
Very Poor
Lowest Class
Combined colouring (as Pink and Red) indicates a mixture of the Classes which the Colours represent.

ARSENAL
ST MARGARET [Det.]
THE BAPTIST
ST NICHOLAS [Detached]
ST PAUL
Plumstead
ST NICHOLAS
ST MARKS
PLUMSTEAD COMMON
THE ASCENSION
Mortuary Chapel
WOOLWICH CEMETERY
Reservoir
Mission Hall
Heathfield
Heathfield Terrace
Orchard House
Hope Grove
Stones
Workhouse
Library
School
BM 52.1
BM 72
BM 63
BM 87
BM 79
BM 78
BM 106
BM 50.6
BM 54.6
BM 166.1
BM 116.8
BM 137.3
BM 165.9
BM 187.6
BM 182
BM 171.2
BM 170.3
BM 132.4
BM 195.0
BM 197.3
100

CHAPTER IV

ILLUSTRATIONS

The reader will please accept the following extracts from our notes as illustrations only.

§ 1

(1) *Baptists at Greenwich.*

I was late in arriving at Mr. Spurgeon's church, and standing outside the door heard the long prayer, during which the doorkeeper, who stood at my side when not moving about his duties, made occasional pious ejaculations. The building was practically full. I was given a seat in the back row beside the door, and a lady who sat near kindly lent me her Bible in order that I might read the text for myself. Mr. Spurgeon makes much of his text, reading it through twice at the outset, and coming back to it again and again. It was a great one, from 1 Kings, chap. viii., verses 38 and 39, on prayer and supplication by every man, "knowing the plague of his own heart"—Solomon's prayer, with the great refrain, "Hear Thou in heaven thy dwelling place." Without having his father's genius, Mr. Charles Spurgeon has great ease, readiness and vigour, and even grace of language. The sermon, like the prayer, was fully long, being drawn out and filled with crudities, but seemed to give satisfaction to his people. The Thursday following this Sunday would be, it was announced, the twentieth anniversary of the day when the first sixty members met 'in an upper room' to inaugurate this church, and

invited Mr. Spurgeon to be their pastor. They are now six hundred, but of the original sixty only seventeen remain.

(2) *Baptists at Woolwich.*

On Sunday morning the Baptist Tabernacle at Woolwich was fairly filled, there being a considerable number of children present for whom there was a short special address, as is often the case with the Baptists. Some of the children left at twelve o'clock and then the regular sermon began. The text was from the record of David's death. "David served his generation and then fell asleep." It was not eloquent at all, but was forcible and original, and absolutely without pose or affectation of any kind. The preacher was evidently quite at ease, and though undoubtedly far superior in education and power of thought to his audience, never spoke down to them; he expected them to reach up to him. He introduced Napoleon and Bismarck, Cromwell and St. Francis of Assisi, as instances of public work, more or less or not at all, marred by self-seeking ambition, and seemed to assume that his audience were as familiar with the lives of these men as he himself was. He spoke of the need of wide sympathies in those who sought to serve their generation, and of the changes of hopes and aims which he could remember. He referred to the time when Science was to cure everything and supersede Religion, and of the Positivist ideal, and quoted from George Eliot a passage about beliefs: belief in God, in a future life, and in duty; the last alone remaining sure. Both these phases had passed, and Religion remained. So, too, with Socialism, which also was to cure everything, and now only the religious side of Socialism was any good. Or a solution was to be found in clubs and brotherly love, but ask anyone what good clubs had been! The sermon was entirely extempore. The pastor simply stopped when time was up, having evidently still plenty more to say. The sermon at the evening service was less noticeable, but ended very effectively with a story from the siege of Delhi. The soldiers in hospital, when the doctor came round, knowing that the assault was to be made, said: "Make us fit; fit to fight to-morrow." The doctor could not do that; but, said the preacher, we might

make that prayer and Christ could grant it; could make us fit—— Then let us pray: 'make us fit to fight to-morrow.'

(3) *P. S. A. at a Congregational Church.*

Those present, about fifty in number, were evidently a selection of the younger members of the congregation. There was a complete though small orchestra, string and wind instruments, piano, and even drum; and a lady soloist. The minister presided, very smiling, and full of melting jokes about the weather. The address was given by a special evangelist; very wishy-washy stuff, based on Christ's visit to Simon's house when Simon's wife's mother lay ill of a fever. He always spoke of her as 'the old lady,' or 'the mother-in-law,' with the usual jokes on this subject, adding a serious but not well placed attack on those who under such circumstances find in the workhouse a means of ridding themselves of the encumbrance.

The address was altogether below his audience; perhaps on the theory that the P. S. A. attracts the classes 'who do not otherwise enter God's house;' whereas those who attended this service were just the very pick of the young people out of a respectable little body of Nonconformists. It is excellent that these young people should work up an orchestra and meet on Sunday afternoon, young men and young women together, but it would be better that the other pretence should be abandoned.

(4) *The Brethren.*

There are two sects: the one strict and exclusive, the other open. What follows was written concerning one of the open churches. Properly speaking no leaders are recognised, but in practise it always happens that two or three come to the front and lead the services; very often it is only one, and the success of each church is largely bound up with the personality of one man. A service on the first day of the week is all that is essential. This is known as 'the Assembly,' when the Brethren meet for 'breaking of bread.' It is held in the morning, excepting once a month when, to suit the convenience of some, it is

in the evening. A loaf is broken and fragments are given to each. Only Church members or those vouched for by a member can share in this, and even when vouched for no man may attend many times in succession without joining the Church or being told he is not wanted. A collection is made to defray expenses. The service is one of worship and praise. There is no sermon. For music the voice only is used. In theory anyone may get up to pray or read a portion of the Scripture, as the Spirit may move him; in practice only two or three of the Brethren do so. Gospel meetings are held in the evening and sometimes in the afternoon also. The size of the gathering depends on the popularity of the speaker.

(5) *A Railway Men's Mission at Deptford.*

As I reached the door, a uniformed signal-man, bag in hand, came up. He was Mr. T* * * * * * who, though not the Superintendent of the Mission, has been connected with it from the commencement. It was originally started in a private house, then moved to a small hall in Napier Street, and finally to the hall in Amersham Grove which holds two hundred, and behind which the members have with their own hands erected a smaller hall. Including the choir and brass band there are about seventy workers, all voluntary. Meetings are held every night except Saturday. All who come are local people, and two-thirds are connected with the railway, all grades from inspectors to porters being represented, but 'not a station-master.' The hall is nearly filled on Sunday afternoon, when a children's service is held, and in the evening, when the meeting is for adults. On Sunday morning an inner circle of 'Christians' attend the service and they come again on Thursday evening for a Gospel meeting, and 'anything special' will fill the hall then. Engine drivers and guards, and in a minor degree porters also, are subject, said our informant, to very great temptations. Drink is still a great evil, though not so bad as formerly. Cases are severely dealt with by the companies. Some men have been reduced and others dismissed. With treating and tipping 'a Christian guard has difficulty in keeping his integrity.' Card-playing for money is prevalent on some of the trains, and some guards facilitate it.

(6) *A Mission at Woolwich.*

The mission was started twenty years ago by an army colonel for the inhabitants of a group of rough, poor streets in the very outskirts, really a village set down in a wild no-man's-land on the frontier of town life. The inhabitants were brickmakers, market gardeners, fruit pickers and gipsies. Some of these live here still, but as the market gardens are replaced by others further out, so do the workers move; the clay of the former gardens is all cut out for bricks; new streets are being built all round, and a better class of residents is coming in. The people are labourers still, but are employed in the building trade or at the Arsenal. The mission had failed to attract the rough class, or if any attended the services it was for the sake of the charities distributed. Its supporters used to dip their hands into their pockets freely. Rough lads would come to the club, but not to the services; nor at the club did they care to read the books and papers supplied, but would spend Sunday morning smoking and playing at 'Tip it' (a game better known, I think, as 'Up Jenkin') for penny stakes. So the club was abandoned.

The attendance at the mission is improving—some may still come only for what they hope to get, but the better sort are more amenable to religious influence, and the Sunday schools are becoming more popular. Failing to fulfil the intentions of its founders, the mission is gradually being turned into a church.

(7) *Views of a Congregationalist Minister.*

. . . . . Religious feelings are changing with the times and the people. There is greater diffusion of the Spirit, but less intensity. Those who know of religion are more numerous and there is greater humanity in consequence; more is done for sickness, for good housing, and for drainage. It is not done openly for the Lord, but it is because of the diffusion of the Lord's Spirit that it is done. But there is not that sternness about religious observance that there used to be. 'Persecution is what we want to give us life.' They won't now even prosecute for Church rates. Some places will always draw a congregation because of their historical position and interest, but others depend on the sermon or the music. Our

people don't go to church (as they used to do) even in spite of the preacher and the service. There is a leakage among the young married couples to the Established Church. They want variety, they want colour. It may be the beginning of not going anywhere. What has been lost in intensity may have been gained in greater diffusion, what is needed is something to crystalize this 'suspended Christianity' and give it form. But where to find it? He cannot even guess from what direction it will come.

(8) *A Voluble Preacher.*

. . . . . Some efforts after popularity in a rather dead parish were shown at the parish hall, which stands on the opposite side of the street, where there appeared a rough announcement in coloured chalk 'Mr. H * * * * * comes again Monday—won't you come too?' . . . . . It was perhaps Mr. H * * * * * whose preaching I had heard on Sunday morning. The church was occupied by thirty or forty adults and a few children, listening to, or at any rate sitting under, a torrent of words from an Irishman in the pulpit. He went far faster than his audience could follow, and I in my place at the back could only catch a word or a phrase here and there. I did not know that the English language could be spoken so fast. It was hardly to be accounted eloquence, but was just earnest impetuosity poured forth in every-day language.

(9) *A scandalous difficulty* (*Church of England*).

. . . . . The vicar is still alive, but the living has been in sequestration for sixteen years for the payment of his debts. This will be finally accomplished shortly, and then he can come back, and probably will do so, and make new ones. Meanwhile, according to occasional paragraphs in provincial papers, he continues his swindling operations.

§ 2

(1) *Saturday Night at Woolwich* (*May 27th*, 1900).

From Shooter's Hill on bicycle at 10 p.m.: all dark and quiet till New Road was reached; there the crowd began. Many soldiers in uniform, shops all open, and booths on west side of street leading to the market-place. Men, women, and children all good-humoured and well dressed, out for marketing and to see the fun or for a promenade simply; and all young. Children, from babies in arms to ten years old, husbands and wives and fathers and mothers, between twenty and thirty-five; hardly a grey hair or an old face among them all. A few soldiers, almost tipsy, at the corner of the New Road and Thomas Street, a small crowd watching them and listening to the nigger minstrels playing outside the public-house. In the market itself there was greater seriousness. Most were coming away with their purchases in large paper parcels, but a good number were still buying, and the market-place was full. The man never carried the parcels, except where the woman had a child in her arms, and not always then. The men, in caps and bowler hats, wore collars, and a few had black coats. The women in bonnets and cloaks, not quite in their best, but, like the men, evidently dressed for the occasion. Two or three labourers in their working clothes were the exceptions. Chief interest centred round the butchers' stalls, but some were doing a good business in flowers and bedding-out plants. From the market the flow of the crowd was towards Powis and Hare Streets, where the best shops are for drapery, grocery, cheese and fruit. Fair strawberries were selling at 8*d* a pound, good cherries at 6*d*. The crowd was good-tempered and sober, and out more for promenade than business. Such business as was done was inside the shops. Boot and shoe shops were best lighted and made the best show; after them came the public-houses.

Thence to the streets which comprise the 'Dust-hole.' I found them quiet and dark, there seemed to be few people in the common lodging-house kitchens, and not many in the beer-house. Most doors were open; smell of dirt in the air, dark filthy stains on the pavement

on either side, and a man asleep, drunk. Figures emerged suddenly from dark corners and disappeared again as mysteriously as they had come. The first and most obvious way of improving these streets would be to light them better. Returned shortly after closing time (*i.e.* 12.10). There was then more life in the streets; the occupants of the public-houses had just been turned out. They stood in groups round the open doors. There was no quarrelling—no noise. Occasionally a voice would rise, but it never went so far as a row.

In the market everyone was packing up and going off with barrows and pony carts. One joint, which had been 6*d*, was now offered at 3*d* per lb. The last pieces were being sold off. Only the poorest were buying now. Then back past the barracks, seeing a good number of soldiers who could only just walk. So on past the Common to Shooter's Hill, where, in a small patch of wood, was a nightingale singing loudly and being answered by another in the Crown Woods on the south side of the hill. It is thanks to the execrable train service that nightingales still sing, and pheasants are still preserved, and the bluebells carpet the woods within twelve miles of St. Paul's.

* * * * *

During the evening I had looked in at the music-hall in Beresford Street, Woolwich, and found the last piece on. It was a set piece, called "Drummed Out," and made the tenth and final turn of an ordinary music-hall programme. The scene showed part of Woolwich barracks, and the acting consisted of ordinary military duties — sentry, changing guard, parade, &c. — performed on the stage, varied with comic figures, such as the regimental cook and the Irish grandmother of a drummer boy, whose catch-words were well known, and were shouted at them by boys in the pit as soon as each actor appeared, the actors chaffing back from the stage. The theatre was crammed with an audience of about two thousand, of whom not twelve were in uniform, and hardly fifty were women. The whole of the pit-floor to the orchestra was occupied by boys and youths from fourteen to eighteen, and the average age must have been well below twenty-five. All quiet and orderly, washed and brushed and dressed for the occasion.

PART II

THE SOUTH-WEST

Date of the Inquiry in this district: 1900

CHAPTER I

BATTERSEA

§ 1

NINE ELMS AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Passing now from furthest East to furthest West, we start at Nine Elms.

The sketch map of the South-West, which I submit herewith, shows a district bounded by the river and intersected in every direction by railway lines. It includes the great open spaces of Battersea Park and Clapham Common, and ends both to South and West in open fields. It is a district of rapid and recent changes ; of wholesale and, I think, for the most part, wholesome migrations of population. There are here, side by side, the newly prosperous with the old wealthy conditions of life ; new, as well as old poverty ; new, as well as old slums ; while, pervading all and spreading everywhere in its thousands, is the ordinary London working-class population, which must, after all, claim our greatest concern.

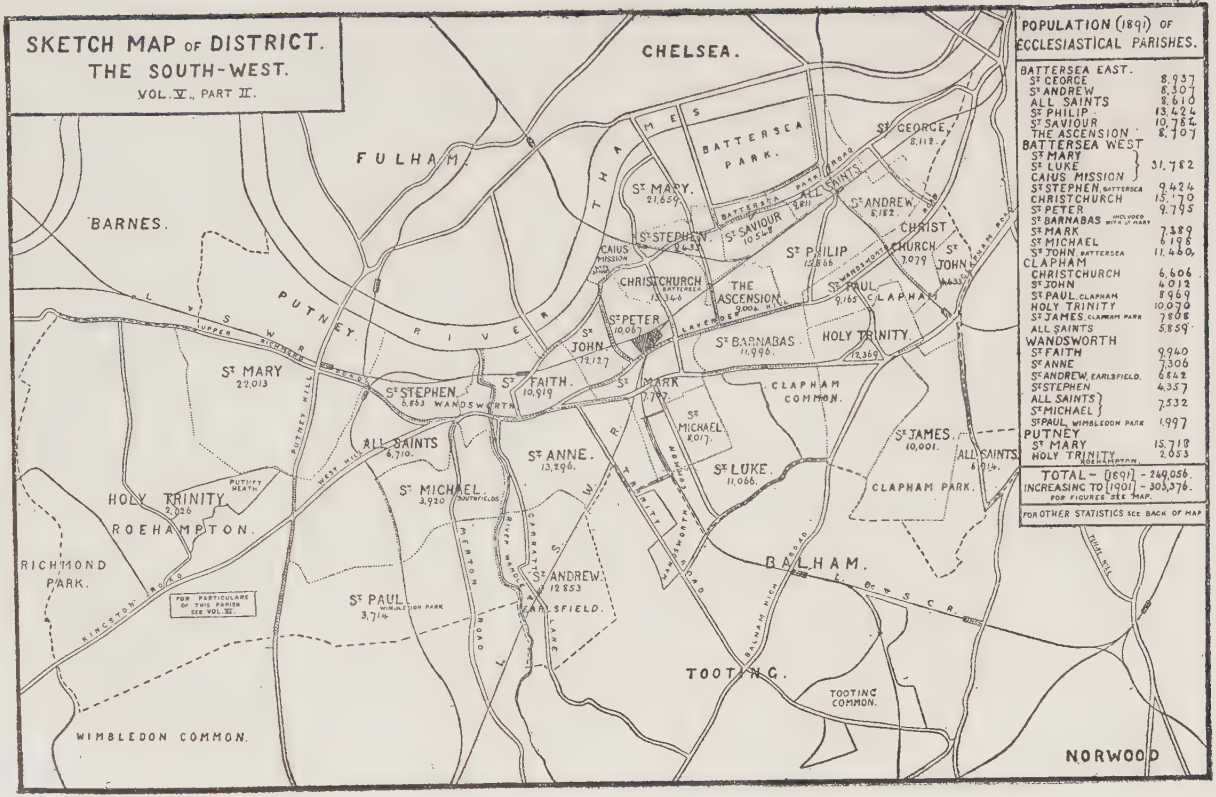
The largeness of the main issues involved in this 'study of a city in motion,' and other considerations, of which a fear of wearying my readers is not the least, will cause me to omit many details which might in themselves be worthy of notice, and to content myself with a rather rapid review of the religious influences at work. I shall ask the reader to follow me from

parish to parish, but only to note what is peculiar or remarkable, or illustrative of the larger view which in this way I hope gradually to develop.

The black and blue colony of Nine Elms, in the right-hand corner of the map, is being, bit by bit, destroyed by the encroachments of the gas works and the railway, and what remains is being beneficially affected through pressure brought to bear by the local authorities in regard to overcrowding. The people are gradually going. We shall find some of them again further on.

It is an area of very degraded poverty, and shows little or no improvement except as regards the numbers concerned. As one of the clergy says, there is, perhaps, 'nothing for it but scattering,' but if the authorities allow it to remain till that happens, it will probably end by being entirely absorbed for railway or gas works extensions. The curate-in-charge thinks his people not so black as they are painted. He speaks of general slackness and lack of vitality among the children ; but also tells us of windows broken by boys, unruly with high spirits ; and our own report says that, though dirty, the children looked fairly well fed. A considerable proportion of the residents are Irish Roman Catholics, and, so far as he is concerned, the priest gives them a good word for independence ; they do not beg much. He also says that serious crime among them is rare.

Here is the description of this spot taken from our own notes : 'The houses are two storey and flush with the pavement, with no backs to speak of. The streets, with the exception of a bit here and a bit there, all show the usual signs of squalor in an exaggerated form : broken windows, filthy cracked plaster, dirty ragged children, and drink-sodden women. Several of the children were without shoes and stockings, one


SKETCH MAP OF DISTRICT.
THE SOUTH-WEST.
VOL. V., PART II.
CHELSEA.
FULHAM.
BARNES.
PUTNEY RIVER
THAMES
BATTERSEA PARK.
BATTERSEA PARK ROAD
ALL SAINTS
St GEORGE 8,112.
St MARY. 21,659.
St ANDREW. 8,182.
St STEPHEN. 9,433.
St SAVIOUR 10,528.
CHRIST CHURCH 7,079.
St JOHN 9,433.
CAIUS MISSION
CHRISTCHURCH BATTERSEA 13,346.
St PHILIP 13,866.
THE ASCENSION 2,004.
St PAUL. 9,165. CLAPHAM
St PETER 10,061.
St JOHN 12,127.
St BARNABAS 11,996.
HOLY TRINITY. 12,369.
St MARY 22,013.
St STEPHEN 8,853 WANDSWORTH
St FAITH. 10,919.
St MARK 1,777.
CLAPHAM COMMON.
St MICHAEL. 8,017.
ALL SAINTS 6,710.
St ANNE. 13,296.
St LUKE. 11,086.
St JAMES. 10,001.
ALL SAINTS 8,214.
HOLY TRINITY 2,026.
ROEHAMPTON.
St MICHAEL. 3,920.
CLAPHAM PARK.
RICHMOND PARK.
FOR PARTICULARS OF THIS PARISH SEE VOL. III.
St ANDREW. 12,853.
EARLSFIELD.
St PAUL. 3,716.
BALHAM.
TOOTING.
TOOTING COMMON.
WIMBLEDON COMMON.
NORWOOD
POPULATION (1891) OF ECCLESIASTICAL PARISHES.
BATTERSEA EAST.
St GEORGE 8,937
St ANDREW 8,307
ALL SAINTS 8,610
St PHILIP 13,424
St SAVIOUR 10,782
THE ASCENSION 8,707
BATTERSEA WEST
St MARY
St LUKE 31,782
CAIUS MISSION
St STEPHEN, BATTERSEA 9,424
CHRISTCHURCH 15,170
St PETER 9,795
St BARNABAS INCLUDED WITH ST MARY
St MARK 7,389
St MICHAEL 6,198
St JOHN, BATTERSEA 11,460.
CLAPHAM
CHRISTCHURCH 6,606
St JOHN 4,012
St PAUL, CLAPHAM 8,969
HOLY TRINITY 10,070
St JAMES, CLAPHAM PARK 7,808
ALL SAINTS 5,859
WANDSWORTH
St FAITH 9,940
St ANNE 7,306
St ANDREW, EARLSFIELD. 6,642
St STEPHEN 4,357
ALL SAINTS
St MICHAEL 7,532
St PAUL, WIMBLEDON PARK 1,997
PUTNEY
St MARY 15,718
HOLY TRINITY 2,053
ROEHAMPTON.
TOTAL – (1891) – 249,056.
INCREASING TO (1901) – 305,376.
FOR FIGURES SEE MAP.
FOR OTHER STATISTICS SEE BACK OF MAP

STATISTICS *bearing on the* AREA INCLUDED IN SKETCH MAP NO. 20. *Described in Part II., Vol. V.*

CENSUS STATISTICS.

Showing Increase or Decrease of Population.

Population in				Increase per Cent.	
1881.	1891.	1896.	1901.	1881-1891.	1891-1901.
184,881	258,744	290,735	312,810	**39·9 %**	**21·9 %**

Density of Population.

1891.	1901.
Persons per Acre.	
32·5	39·2
Inhabited Houses.	
37,996	46,461
Persons per House.	
6·8	6·7
Number of Acres.	
7,974	

Age and Sex in 1891.

Age.	Males.	Females.	Together.
Under 5 years	16,742	16,615	33,357
— 15 ,,	29,047	29,730	58,777
— 20 ,,	11,752	13,316	25,068
— 25 ,,	10,579	13,087	23,666
— 35 ,,	19,968	23,019	42,987
— 45 ,,	15,150	16,808	31,958
— 55 ,,	10,441	11,409	21,850
— 65 ,,	5,375	6,826	12,201
65 and over	3,421	5,459	8,880
Totals ...	122,475	136,269	258,744

NOTE.—The Statistics here given relate to the Registration Sub-districts of East Battersea, West Battersea, Clapham, Wandsworth and Putney. The Sketch Map corresponds closely to this area, only the Ecclesiastical parishes of St. Mary Magdalene (Wandsworth) and the Ascension (the detached part of Clapham) being omitted and treated in Vol. VI. For details of Special Family Enumeration see Appendix.

SPECIAL ENUMERATION for this INQUIRY (1891).

Sex, Birthplace and Industrial Status of Heads of Families.

Sex.		Birthplace.		Industrial Status.			Total Heads.
Male.	Female.	In London.	Out of London.	Employers	Employees	Neither.	
45,939 84 %	8,864 16 %	22,764 42 %	32,039 58 %	4,845 9 %	38,578 70 %	11,380 21 %	54,803 100 %

Constitution of Families.

Heads.	Others Occupied.	Unoccupied.	Servants.	Total in Families.
54,803 (1·0)	46,742 (·85)	138,853 (2·53)	10,731 (·20)	251,129 (4·58)

Social Classification according to *Rooms Occupied* or *Servants Kept.*

	Persons.	Per Cent.	
4 or more persons to a room	3,548	1·4	Crowded 19·1 %
3 & under 4 ,, ,,	8,831	3·4	
2 & ,, 3 ,, ,,	37,031	14·3	
1 & ,, 2 ,, ,,	62,197	24·1	Not Crowded 80·9 %
Less than 1 person to a room	10,925	4·2	
Occupying more than 4 rooms	86,956	33·6	
4 or more persons to 1 servant	15,654	6·1	
Less than 4 persons to 1 servant & 4 to 7 persons to 2 servants	10,119	3·9	
All others with 2 or more servants	5,137	2·0	
Servants in families	10,731	4·1	
Inmates of Institutions (including servants)	7,615	2·9	
Total	258,744	100	
Living in Poverty (as estimated in 1889)		29·1 %	100 %
,, in Comfort (,, ,,)		70·9 %	

girl of about five with nothing on but a shirt (it was summer), and the police say that it is quite common to see the small children running about stark naked. The place is almost completely isolated. In hot weather the people often bring out mattresses and sleep in the open, for the houses swarm with vermin.'

Many of the inhabitants are old residents. Some families have been here ever since the streets were made, thirty or forty years ago. Engaged on the railway or at the gas works, many of the men, though perhaps irregularly employed, earn good wages; others are costermongers of the unsatisfactory class who take to street selling as a last resource. Destitution, when it occurs, is usually the result of drink.

Mrs. Despard, a very noble-minded Roman Catholic lady, gives her life to these people, and especially to the young amongst them; and the people recognise her self-devotion. The boys' club she has made her home: or, perhaps, one might better say, her home is their club. She does not find them unmanageable. They submit readily to her gentle force. 'You hurt me,' cried a big strong fellow, but he did not resist when she took him by the arm in the cause of order. She laments the stunted growth of the lads and the early age at which they become their own masters. They are allowed to smoke in the club; it might be better for their growth that they should not, but they will have their 'fags,' and it is felt that to forbid smoking would be unwise. There is a Sunday 'conference,' which, although religion has to be run lightly, is in fact a Bible-class. In truth the work is ostensibly more social than religious in character, and there is no trace of the propagandist spirit, for, though herself a recent convert, Mrs. Despard never proselytises, and the representative of the Church of England himself says that if some do adopt her religion it is from admiration of her character.

As the boys become men, the problem of 'after' presses upon her. She is something like the possessor of a pet lamb who wonders what is to be done with it when it is a sheep. Is there nothing but the butcher? In the case of the club, must the connection be broken and dispersion inevitably come? Probably it will come naturally, and the club continue to deal with successive generations of boys, passing in and, in due time, passing out again, as at a school. But the result is not all that could be wished.

In the adjacent parish of St. Anne (Vauxhall), this lady has another club, of better class, not so recently started, which includes older members, and into it she hoped to be able to draft the boys from Nine Elms when they became men; but she finds the difference in class too great. Her rough boys can come to the other club for gymnasium practice, and its members will 'help,' but that is all that can be done by the one club for the other.

For serious crime Mrs. Despard gives the district a clean bill. Drink and gambling are the local vices, and the quarrelling and violence apt to follow excessive drinking make up, she says, the greater part of the indictment that could be brought; although we hear once more of the curse of 'loaning.' Some of the worst harpies are women who make it their business to tempt others, generally younger than themselves, first to drink and then to borrow.

For the girls of this neighbourhood there is a club, not actually in Nine Elms, but near by in New Road, carried on in a room hired from the vicar of the parish, but it is not connected with the church, nor is any religious work attempted. All the girls have attended Sunday schools, but most of them confess that 'they chuck religion when they go to work.' They are of the poorest class and are visited in their homes, but excepting some help towards holiday money

nothing is ever given or expected. The basis of the work of this club is simple friendship.

In the two parishes lying to the south-west of Nine Elms the religious bodies work mainly as missions, and it is very difficult to measure their success. Although preaching was the *forte* of the old vicar (who has lately left), the congregations in St. Andrew's Church were never large, and the people seem to have been as indifferent to the ultra-Protestant doctrines inculcated as they certainly are to the Romish principles and practices they heard denounced. By one means or another, including out-of-door preaching, all, it is said, were touched, but with small results. The Primitive Methodists have a little chapel sparsely attended, and do what they can, but they have to bring in workers from outside. The neighbouring population, their minister says, show a general lack of interest, though much is done to make the services popular. 'For Watchnight they will crowd in hundreds, some having drunk more freely than is good for them,' but they 'sober down after being set to sing old hymns to familiar tunes.' Thus they know the hymns; so much at least religious training has done for them.

The most successful work in this district is that of a Presbyterian mission church. He who for fifteen years has had charge here, left a prosperous cause elsewhere to come to an almost empty hall, believing it to be the Lord's will that he should do so. His workers, too, are drawn from outside; coming mostly from the Trinity Presbyterian Church, Clapham Road; but eight of his visitors are working people living in the neighbourhood. The visiting is systematic. The social agencies, which he terms their fishing-ground, are of the temperance kind. The whole work appears to be solid and to result in the building up of a Church. The success here appears to be largely due to the interest aroused by well prepared sermons,

which, it is said, cause those who come once to come again. But it is manifest that this remark applies to a picked selection rather than the mass. The mission is mainly financed from its parent church.

The general movement of population in this neighbourhood seems to be exhausted; and the people have apparently found their level, since those who leave one street are apt to turn up in the next. It is claimed that the district as a whole is less rough, and it is mentioned as a sign of progress that almost all the men have two suits of clothes.

§ 2

FROM BATTERSEA PARK TO LAVENDER HILL

Near Battersea Park, too, and largely owing to the park itself, we hear that 'further decay is arrested.' Overlooking this beautiful playground of the South-West, 'flats' have been erected during the last few years, the occupants of which are semi-fashionable people, most of whom, so far as they attend any place of worship at all, incline chiefly to High Church, helping to fill All Saints'; but from the same flats come some of the best workers at St. Saviour's, which is Evangelical. Both churches, however, complain that 'flat' dwellers as a class are of little use in Church work, are difficult to deal with, and moreover sometimes of doubtful reputation. At All Saints' the visiting is largely in the hands of four ladies, who reside at the Church House. Both churches draw some assistance from the West End. Outside of the Church services, most of the work undertaken from St. Saviour's is under lay management and due to lay initiative. It seems to be particularly well done. It

is complained that a portion of the area lying between the park and Battersea Park Road, being still nominally attached to the mother parish of St. Mary's, is rather a no-man's-land parochially.

The Roman Catholics here, hard working and undermanned, gather a weekly average of about twelve hundred—roughly one-third of their adherents—to the Sunday Masses at the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The Baptists, though for the moment lacking a minister, have kept together a large and active congregation at their tabernacle, and the United Methodists have here two small churches linked together. The pastor says that his inner band of workers—wage-earning folk, and mostly railway men—are almost too keen ; that they wear themselves out, doing all the work and finding the money also. In spite of the devotion shown the congregations are small and rather decreasing in numbers.

South of the Battersea Park Road the proximity of the park loses its effect. As far as the railway the streets are poor and the people practically untouched by Church, Chapel or Mission. Those who can afford it move southward, and their places are taken by some of the poor displaced from Chelsea. The poverty is not intense, but is all-pervading. One of the missions in this unpromising district stretches out its arms far and wide in its care for crippled children, who are sought anywhere, from Vauxhall to Putney, and as far to the South as London extends: many ladies connected with various chapels and missions helping in the work. Locally the mission concentrates rather on the gipsy encampments, of which there are a number in the neighbourhood. These people, living in their vans, come and go, travelling in the country part of every year, and so form here a stream within a stream. They move about a good deal within the London area as well as outside, but are usually anchored fast all winter,

and throughout the summer one or another always occupies the pitch. They are thus in a sense, permanent. They are married in the parish church and bring their children to be baptized; some are said to be well-to-do. Some of them like the missionary's visits; others not.

South of the railway a really remarkable effort has been made to establish permanently satisfactory conditions. The attempt is not the work of the Churches, though they benefit by it; nor due to the vigour of Local Government, though that has helped. It is due rather to the policy and management of two large estates: the Shaftesbury Park Estate, belonging to the Artisan Dwellings' Company, and that held by Lord Battersea and the Flower Trustees. A kind of social fortress has been built, which after taking advantage of the movement of population to fill the houses with a certain class, seeks to withstand further movement, and so arrest decay. The rules of the Shaftesbury Park Estate as to sub-letting, &c., are strict; everything is done to maintain order and respectability. There is no licensed house, nor is there any church: neither God nor Devil, as it is said, admitted on the premises. In the centre of this block of streets is a great Board school; but the churches and public-houses stand outside. The rents have been raised a good deal since the start, but, nevertheless, there is a huge waiting list of those desiring to take houses.

The Flower Estates are managed on similar lines with the same aims, and though the tenants tend as time goes on to become slightly poorer, consequent on outward drift to the new houses that are being built near Clapham Common, these objects have in great measure been attained. The streets are trim, the houses attractive, and the people who live in them are representative of the upper-grade artisan and lower-grade salaried classes. Between these two classes there

is no longer any marked social distinction, its place being taken by cleavages of opinion, and as these necessarily unite as well as separate, they tend to break down the remains of class difference. Under such conditions the Churches can reap advantage. The common aim, that of respectability, is not a high one, but it helps the work of the religious bodies very much.

Wedged in between Shaftesbury Park and the Flower Estates, lies a district, known locally as the Beaufoy Estate, which ecclesiastically is the mission district of St. Bartholomew. In it the houses are of the same type, but are not so well built or so well cared for, and the people are poorer and more crowded. There has been a gradual decay, but the continuation of one of its main streets into Shaftesbury Park seems to have arrested this. Besides the central Board school, this block has its mission church.

Amongst the respectable residents on these estates there is still much indifference to religion, but it is not flaunted. It is rather the correct thing to attend a place of worship, and neither chaff nor ridicule ensues from so doing. If there is hostility, it is rather between rival sects ; if contempt is expressed, it reflects some bias towards, not against, religion, as, for example, when Low Church people or Protestant Dissenters speak of a High Church as 'that Romish place.' The general attitude as to religion compares, we are told, favourably with that of any West-End parish, though this, it is explained, is 'not a high standard.'

The 'Romish place' referred to in this case is the Church of the Ascension which, at first a church without a parish, has been allotted a district which includes the whole of the Shaftesbury Park Estate, and has had a great success ; the huge red building, with rounded end, like the stern of a man-of-war, and a solemn interior set out with rush-seated chairs, being

filled with kneeling worshippers. It is claimed that those who come are mainly parishioners, or at any rate are from the district. They are of all ages, men, women, and children, and the proportion of men is large. Systematic visiting and definite teaching are said to be the secrets of success. 'You must go to them, not expect them to come to you;' and, 'Either extreme wins adherents; it is the whitey-brown who fail.'

There is probably something more than this; some personal element; some gift of organization, as well as of the Spirit—but of the success attained there can be no doubt. On Sunday afternoons the children attend successive services in relays according to age, and it is a pretty sight to see the muster of the second set in the side streets, marshalled there to await the exit of the smaller fry. They are well-dressed children all. Neither in the congregation nor amongst the children is there any apparent poverty, but nevertheless a good deal of relief is given: 'no sick case is ever neglected.'

The other extreme of religious doctrine and practice is represented here best by the Wesleyans, who have a very successful cause in Queen's Road, and I do not doubt that, though they may not wish it, these churches help each other greatly through the stimulus that opposing tenets give. Like the other, this church 'caught on from the first;' but its connection is mainly one of 'continuity;' consisting, that is, of people brought up as Methodists and not drawn to any great extent from outside, unless it be from other Nonconformist bodies. The building looks full on Sunday night, and to whoever may occupy the pulpit, 'it is an inspiring sight to see the people rise.' The members of the congregation are fervent and active in the service of the church, and give very liberally to its objects. Among those who attend the services there are no signs of poverty.

These churches both draw partly from the streets to

the south, in this way retaining some, while losing others, of those who move away. The Wesleyans have been prompt to follow the movement and growth of population by erecting a new and very handsome church near Clapham Common, to which I shall refer later. If some leave, others come, and although the new building fills, the old one does not empty.

That no serious social changes are involved in the flow of population here is shown also in the case of the Primitive Methodists, who manage to maintain their numbers, although they complain that it is 'like preaching to a procession.' Their chapel is almost under the shadow of the Ascension Church, but in spirit they are 'as far asunder as the poles.' Thus they are not of the 'whitey-brown' order. But, it must be said, neither are they very successful. They lack fashion, which seems to play a considerable part in all churchgoing, and are burthened with a heavy and depressing debt.

§ 3

OLD BATTERSEA AND THE RIVER SIDE

Before following the population southward I must first speak of the older parishes which skirt the river bank, and show how, as so often, 'poverty clings to the water.'

The parish of St. Mary, Battersea, once stretched from Battersea Bridge to the further side of Clapham Common, and, curiously enough, still includes these extremes, though half a dozen new parishes have been formed between. For the Battersea portion of the parish, there is the old church by the river and the new church by Battersea Park, both bearing the name of St. Mary. The third church, St. Luke's, near Clapham

Common, we shall refer to later. The whole work is inspired by the broad, genial, kindly spirit of the rector, who has held his office for twenty-eight years. His sympathies are wide, and those who work under him are of various shades of churchmanship from not very High to not very Low.

All that remains of ancient Battersea clusters round the old parish church, which is beautifully placed, overlooking the river where it bends southward. The courts and alleys of the old village can be traced, but the greatest poverty and degradation are not to be found among them. For these we must look on either side. There is one black spot in particular (Orville Road) with a class of inhabitants upon whom 'deaconesses indeed may practise,' but upon whom no impression can be made. It is a street of three-storeyed houses, showing all the usual signs of squalor. Turning sharply at right angles to itself, it forms an elbow, and the railway upon which it backs provides a means of escape when needed. In it congregate criminals and street-gamblers. Pickets are placed at each end to give warning of the approach of strangers. Of these people the remark of the police is, 'You've got Seven Dials there.' If the girls join clubs they must be provided for on special nights, as others will not mix with them. Structurally there is nothing wrong about the houses, though they are unduly crowded on the ground, but morally the place is a plague-spot which shows no improvement. If any decent people come there, it is because, having many children, they despair of finding other quarters, and the only thing to be done is to try to get them away again, although under increased difficulties, because of the bad name given to anyone coming from a street of this character. A small group of courts by Europa Place which were equally bad have been improved. They were entered under an archway, and

formed a *cul-de-sac*, but have been opened up, and though still low, no longer deserve or retain the *sobriquet* of 'Little Hell,' which they formerly enjoyed. Cranfield Street and Parkham Street are remarkable instances of a complete change for the better effected without more reconstruction than is involved in 'doing-up' the houses, solely by the determination of the landlord that it should be so, he (like Hercules) having taken advantage of the stream to let in the new and clean, and so sweep out the old and foul. The old and foul float onwards and we shall meet with them again, but in this instance some of the old tenants seem to have clung to the spot, finding refuge hard by in Surrey Lane, where there are several low common lodging-houses.

At neither of the churches of St. Mary do large numbers attend. The original church has an old parish congregation and a service to match. At St. Mary le Park the ritual is High, though 'not so High as at All Saints.' This church, when completed, should be one of the finest and biggest in South London. Daily services are maintained both morning and evening. 'Sometimes one person comes; more often no one. If more than one it would be a red-letter day.' At the early celebration on Thursday there may be five or six. But at both churches the number of recognised communicants is large, especially so at the old church, and the parish organizations are active and successful. Of these the girls' clubs are the most noticeable. They do to some extent feed the congregations, which the men's clubs do not. There are large day schools, guilds senior and junior, church lads' brigades, very large bands of hope and several mothers' meetings. The poor who ask for charity are not expected to respond by coming to church, and in point of fact they never do.

Although the girls' clubs have a distinctly religious

basis, being closed nightly with prayers and hymns, they are managed on broad non-puritanical lines with plenty of dancing and music. The members work in the riverside factories, and seem to vary in class according to the nature of their employments or the character of the employers. Social distinctions must be carefully considered in all the club arrangements. The good influence exerted may be traced in many ways apart from churchgoing, especially in dress and, it is to be hoped, in morals. Drinking and betting are recognised evils affecting the lives of these girls; the betting touts even waiting to take up their money outside the club door. They spend what they have in these ways rather than on food, and often suffer from under-feeding.

The success of the Church, though not very great, is the best that religion has to show in this district. The Roman Catholics are a small and scattered body, and the Nonconformist Churches are weakened by the southward movement of their supporters and the incoming of the dwellers in flats, who, whatever they may be, are not chapel-goers. They are described to us as 'retired army officers, young married couples, barristers, actors, actresses, and what the police call "queer characters."' Take them all in all they are no worse, perhaps, than others, but probably more mixed and certainly less domestic. They are difficult to visit from the Church point of view, but the clergy again say that from amongst them come some of their best workers.

While the main stream of life and prosperity sets due South, the scum and wreckage carried with it, are thrown off upon its western edge. This wreckage may be traced all along the bank of the Thames and up the valley of the Wandle, and does much to aggravate the evil conditions found in a whole string of parishes. St. Stephen's, Christ Church, the Caius College Mission, St. Peter's and St. John's are all

affected by it, and are all unsatisfactory. Not only are the mass of the people indifferent and irresponsive, and materialistic to a high degree, but the incoming population makes for degradation; not only does religion evoke hardly any response, but its ministers are conscious that the conditions of life are daily growing worse: for lack of religion, they would say, but that is not so sure. At any rate, it does not follow that blame for the present state of things lies with the religious bodies, although it is the fact that the Church clergy strive in vain to infuse religious feeling and that the Nonconformists succeed no better. 'Apathy, utter apathy;' 'People crowd in for concerts, but will not come to religious meetings;' 'Working men given up to social problems;' 'Ministers of religion distrusted because paid,' and so on. We have heard it all before, but nowhere with such a tone of depression and despondency; and the reason is plain. It is because, coupled with this indifference, there is palpable social deterioration. Clergy and ministers work hard, but there is terribly little to show for it. No wonder they are disheartened. The best hope is expressed by a Baptist minister working in one of these parishes who, while admitting how few the visible results are, cannot but believe that so much effort *must* tell: 'There is a militant spirit; everywhere there are bands of earnest workers; the influence *must* be felt;' and he even ventures to aver that on the whole the signs are hopeful; but evidently his faith is sorely tried. He speaks of being 'in the darkest age;' and of the people as 'difficult and stubborn.'

All tell of decadence. A City missionary, who has lived and worked in the neighbourhood for twenty-seven years, says that the district is changing for the worse, and that the decline has been most rapid in the last ten years. Houses built for one family

have now one on each floor, or sometimes two, and the inhabitants are more migratory. Visiting regularly from house to house he sees the change. Results of his work, he says, can be traced at times, but, he adds: 'The people are like an indiarubber ball. You make an impression while you have your thumb on it. Take the pressure away and, like the ball, they are back again where they were.' 'Tendency throughout to a lower level;' 'Becomes poorer and rougher;' 'The better streets are deteriorating;' 'The district is changing rapidly.' Such are the opinions of men well qualified to speak from knowledge even wider than that of clergy, ministers, or missionaries, and our own survey confirms the view that the district has certainly deteriorated both morally and materially. The picture painted by the police is the darkest of all, but in it perhaps the black was laid on too indiscriminately, though no doubt there is much that is rough and troublesome. What struck us rather was the more than usual mixture of the respectable and the squalid.

We have met elsewhere with more crime and more drunken violence, with more degraded poverty, more insanitary conditions and more wretched homes than are to be found here. The apathy and indifference of the working classes towards religion is nothing new, nor is there anything novel about the incoming of a low class driven out by demolitions in other parts. The ingredients are all familiar; it is their combination that is different, and productive of an effect on the imagination even beyond the actual badness of the mixture itself. Elsewhere rampant evil has usually been strictly localized and shown to be decreasing in extent, or where in some particular area it is increasing, the increase is attributable to some special cause. Elsewhere the movement of population has brought about general improvement:

a district may have fallen, but the incoming population has benefited. The middle class may have gone and the churches and chapels be empty, but those who have come have belonged to a lower middle and working class, rising into respectability and yielding at every advance a larger proportion of those who admit the claims of religion. There has, in fact, been levelling up as well as levelling down. But here none of these consoling reflections are pertinent. Here for the first time we seem to have a population in which every element is deteriorating, and it is this I think that makes the work so dismal, and all that is done appear so ineffective.

It is difficult to state a theory of this kind without exaggeration. It is only an aspect of things, but an aspect may go for much. From it there results, or seems to result, a quite peculiar frankness, almost brutality, of expression on the part of those who give their lives to Christian work among the people. The extracts I shall give from the views of two deaconesses will show this. The very phrase 'practising ground for deaconesses,' which has already been quoted, indicates what I mean. It is a rather terrible conception. When I heard the expression first it was used by one of the kindest of men ; it turned up again in the evidence of one of the kindest of women ; and it has reappeared more than once in our notes of evidence from this neighbourhood. Its use is perhaps only 'professional' in its apparent callousness, the Diocesan Deaconesses Home being in this district, and it may not mean so much as I have imported into it. It certainly does not involve any reflection on the devotedness of these ladies to the people they seek to serve.

Of the one hundred and sixty women who belong to the mothers' meeting, managed by one of these ladies, fifty or sixty attend each week, some coming one

week and some another. The women buy dress materials or old clothing. They bring their babies and sit and chat. They do not come to work especially. They have a cup of tea and the deaconess reads or talks to them. The meeting ends with prayer and hymn, and perhaps a short religious address. Such are the ordinary lines of mothers' meeting work.

At first the deaconess refused to have at her meetings any who were living with a man to whom they were not married. By turning out some she hoped to improve the tone of the rest. But the rest, though themselves married, were just the same as to tone, and the chief effect of her rule was that she began to learn less of their lives, being no longer confided in. Previous relations, in anticipation of marriage, she says, are the rule in the parish. Nobody thinks this immoral, and her own disapproval is looked upon as an amiable weakness. None of the women credit her with really strong feelings on the subject. She cannot say that morals are better or worse than they used to be; only before she was ignorant, now she knows. Marriages take place after, or not long before, the birth of the first child. The Church is known to regard pre-marital relations as sinful, and this discourages weddings in church. There has been a greatly increased resort to the Registry office, which involves 'so much less fuss,' it is said. It is also partly a question of clothes, a marriage in church demanding by custom suitable attire.

As to drink among women, this witness is no less outspoken; the habit is increasing. Everyone wants more excitement nowadays. On Mondays and Tuesdays the public-houses the women affect are full. 'It is the married ones mostly who go, and they drink both alone and in company. Young women may on occasion take too much, but seldom or never soak. They would much rather suck sweets than drink. The

craving for sweets passes away and is succeeded by the craving for intoxicants, the one being a direct consequence of the other.' All this sounds very calm and cool, but such is the horror that the thought of the public-house inspires in the mind of our Deaconess, that she has to summon all her courage if obliged to enter one. Among men she notices little if any change in the matter of drink. There is in her parish an 'adult temperance guild which is a staid affair of old fogeys.' The band of hope flourishes, but nothing will keep the children in it after they have left school.

The men are always most polite to the Deaconesses, or if rude when in drink, will come and apologise next morning. If it is necessary to deal with a drunken man these ladies do not hesitate to act sharply. A man who had ruined himself by drink lay in a swinish state on the bed; beyond him almost naked lay his daughter: 'Get up you beast,' the Deaconess said, and gave him a smart blow across the cheek. He struggled up and went into the next room, and the girl was carried off to a new home. Her sister also has been rescued, but the brothers have proved irreclaimable. Such are the incidents of the work carried on, we may fairly suppose, among people who fall somewhat below the average of the population.

There is, it is said, no feeling against religion; but the work of the Churches, Established and Nonconformist alike, is recognised to be a failure on the spiritual side. Ordinary district-visiting often, it is admitted, comes to little more than the leaving of a magazine. The work of the deaconesses is thorough, but 'they don't get the people to church more than one here and there.' 'Church-going,' it is explained, 'entails incessant persecution;' 'to walk with God means something.' The case is mentioned of a woman who used to veil her purpose by carrying a beer jug with her and leaving it at a friend's house on the way to church. Collecting

banks are found to be by far the best lever for obtaining access to the houses and remaining in touch with the people. One of these ladies, with the help of thirty volunteer visitors, collects as much as £1000 a year from about fifteen hundred persons. The money is drawn out and spent, as a rule well, at the end of the year, and is then regarded almost as a bonus: 'Look at that carpet which I got from your club,' said one contributor. The money is collected on Monday or Tuesday; it is useless to go any later in the week. The collecting visits are liked, and of her visitors fully half are themselves working women.

On the subject of charitable relief this lady says she wishes that people who give without inquiry could realize the harm done to character and to religion by indiscriminate giving.

In spite of all discouragement the Churches are working hard. Their organizations seem to be even more than ordinarily complete. The Nonconformists are less prominent. In addition to the Baptist Tabernacle already mentioned there is a small community of the Strict order in the adjoining parish; but the members mostly live elsewhere, and their pastor knows the neighbourhood only by reputation. The members would like to branch out into social work in order to touch the surrounding people, but 'All are fully employed in the day,' and, he adds, 'in the evening our young people take the advantages the Polytechnic offers.' Words which seem like the opening of a door into a different world from that we have been describing.

There is also, within the district we are reviewing, a small church of the Brethren. It consists (said our informant, a master baker) simply of a few like-minded men who meet together to read their Bibles, and for worship, and for the breaking of bread, as is the

custom in their community. Regret was expressed and distress felt at the condition of the Churches, and especially at their lack of unity, which is regarded as the result of not yielding the human will to the governance of Christ, and as a proof that they are not of God. And as even their own little body has split into half a dozen sections, the outlook is indeed dismal. To them the visible Church, spiritually poor, is in the condition of the one depicted in Revelation, rich and increased with goods, whereas Christ saw her poor and wretched.

However, each church and chapel, and each little community, finds some who care; some whose souls are touched; and the stronger the claim made the more certain the response. For any who have faith enough to sink their shaft, the spiritual waters spring; and amongst these we count here the Pentecostal League at Speke Hall. One of the Deaconesses spoke of their work kindly, without a trace of jealousy. She objects to the excitement roused, but some of her own people 'have found the services helpful,' and it cannot be denied that crowds of earnest-minded people are attracted. The effort and its primary success were undoubtedly conditioned on the generally unsatisfactory state of things, moral, social and religious, that has been described, but it does not necessarily follow that the meetings at Speke Hall and the kind of stimulus which they afford act in the direction of improvement.

The story is this: A man who had passed through atheism and agnosticism, who had been a follower of Bradlaugh, and found no salvation there, was roused by an incident which appeared to be a call from God, and began, himself, to preach—of prayer and faith, of the baptism of the spirit and a new Pentecost. Interest, excitement and wonderful experiences followed. 'Neurotic—all hysteria'—is one of the opinions offered to us on this development, but is not fair; too much

of every religion would be swept away by such a judgment. Nor is there the slightest suspicion of fraud; I do not doubt the honesty of all concerned, but would merely point out both the facility and the limitations of this pouring forth of the Spirit; this tapping of strange spiritual forces in man. The leader of this movement has retained the entire control, but maintains that the League has now an organic life of its own entirely independent of his or any other individual leadership. His aim is to establish branches everywhere among Christians who share his faith in the powers of prayer. The object is to act upon religion as a world-wide stimulus, and above all things to seek to deepen the spiritual life. When this great end has been attained the rest follows: 'If you get a man right with God, he will be right with himself and his fellows,' and as a corollary from this view we find that the League, like certain exclusive Churches that do not share its missionary zeal, is critical of the various social, philanthropic, recreative and eleemosynary expedients to which nearly all Churches are apt to resort: 'They are on the wrong lines;' 'Prayer is the weapon that we must learn to wield better, the spiritual life must be our quest.' The members, said in 1900 to number some thirty thousand, form a kind of spiritual brotherhood, praying daily for their churches and for one another 'that the Holy Spirit may mightily fill them and that a general awakening may follow.'

All the work done in connection with the League is voluntary. Speke Hall is its home; the nest from which its wings are tried; but missions are held from time to time in various parts of London, and Exeter Hall has become the centre of its greater demonstration. The local influence is not very important, but the whole thing is interesting as a religious development.

§ 4

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

In writing of Poplar and Bow I referred to Messrs. Crooks and Lansbury as the men under whose leadership the democratic control of local affairs had proved satisfactory. Out of all comparison more energetic than the previous *régime*, it is certainly not less honest, and seems to be at all points fairly amenable to reason. This, if it be maintained, is to be accounted, without doubt, a public asset of no small value. A good deal has been risked to win it. The case of Battersea is different. The man had already been found. When power passed to the democracy, Mr. John Burns had already won the remarkable position he still holds both on the London County Council and in Parliament, and if he 'dominated' the Vestry, as we were told he did, it was rather as a moderating influence, and it remains so under the new borough constitution now that the Vestry no longer exists.

A few quotations may be given to show how the work of the Vestry was regarded locally, and to throw light on the conditions with which they had, and their successors still have, to contend.

'Vestry active and efficient, sanitary inspectors busy, no cause for complaint,' says one of the clergy. 'Vestry very keen and does its best,' says another. 'Active and good,' says a third, and from a Baptist minister we hear that it 'does its work well and is pure considering the class of men on it.' But another of the Church clergy, while speaking of it as active, efficient and very progressive politically, refers to the low moral standard of some members leading to no infrequent jobbery scandals; whilst others express great distrust, suspecting jobbery and corruption; and finally, another Baptist denounces the Vestry as composed of men of

low type, whose meetings become a bear garden ; and who, while the rates go up by leaps and bounds, say openly, 'those on the hill shall pay for us.'

The annual report for 1899-1900, a volume of four or five hundred pages, bears evidence to thoroughness and care. The work of administration was sub-divided amongst many committees, and some hundreds of meetings were held during the year. In the matter of drainage, extensive works have been carried out, both in relaying and in repairing, and the condition of the drainage of the district is reported as being now above the average. The streets on the whole are well cleaned. There is some litter and mess reported in the smaller ones, but the work in this respect compares very favourably with that of the Lambeth Vestry in adjoining streets. Enterprise has been shown in various ways : a dust destructor has been erected, which consumes ninety-three tons per day. Electric lighting has been installed ; there are two sets of baths ; and a central and two branch libraries. The Vestry also gave a series of free concerts in the Town Hall with voluntary performers, which proved successful.

Housing accommodation in this district varies much in different parts. In some there is much overcrowding and such difficulty in obtaining house room that, whatever the inconveniences they may suffer, people are afraid to move. But the inspectors are reported as vigilant and doing all they can to minimise the resultant evils. There are complaints of high and continually rising rents, and people have applied to the guardians for assistance, not because of being in distress, but because unable to find house room. Health throughout is reported as fairly good. The birthrate is high, but the deathrate is low, being 16.6 as compared to 19.3 for all London.

In Battersea, however, more even than in other places, averages hide the facts, so great is the difference between one part of the district and another. The satisfactory condition of the Shaftesbury Park Estate, for instance, must not be allowed to cover up the conditions of life in Orville Road or Nine Elms.

CHAPTER II

CLAPHAM

§ 1

FROM THE RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW

At the north-east end of Clapham Common, in the Old Town and on either side of the High Street, there are the remains of old-established poverty, yielding now, however, to reconstruction, and being either hustled from street to street, or driven away altogether. Elsewhere the Common is surrounded by a great number of new streets and new people. The spacious gardens belonging to the old houses pass one after the other into the hands of the speculative builder; before long every available acre will have been used, and the Common will remain as a people's park in the midst of an immense population.

This district is one of the great pools into which the living stream flows. It has received some of the best parts of this stream, and the pool that is forming is not at all a bad pool.

The character of Lord Battersea's property and of the Shaftesbury Park estate has been already referred to. This excellent character extends to the streets south of Lavender Hill, and on all sides of the Common, with a gradual rise in the social scale as shown by the red and yellow patches on the map. But

by far the greater part of the streets are pink, or pink barred with red, which are the special colourings of the comfortable working and lower middle classes. As the stream flows it has a levelling effect, but there are differences in character and habits (partly due to position), of which we shall be able to take account as we pass from parish to parish.

At the south-west end of the Common, where there are still some of the old houses, stands St. Luke's church, already mentioned as belonging to the parish of St. Mary, Battersea. This church, spoken of in a parish report of twenty-three years ago as 'our little rural outpost,' is now the most fashionable church in this neighbourhood. It provides a beautiful musical service, and is attended by large numbers, coming mostly from this end of the Common where the streets are, and perhaps always will be, occupied by well-to-do people. But on all sides there is a never-ending demand for small two-storeyed houses, arranged for either one or two families. These as fast as they are erected are occupied by people who have enough to enable them to live very comfortably; though, having probably little or nothing saved, they depend on continued prosperity. Among them are many newly-married couples, and there is here no sign of any reduction in the birth-rate. Such is the account given by the rector. These people do not come to church much, and are difficult to visit parochially, but are good respectable people, and not to be called irreligious. They could probably, he thought, be got to come in thousands to an advertised service in some special hall; or might even go a long way to hear some popular evangelist.

Among these new-comers the Nonconformists are more confident and more successful than the Church; but with them, too, there is a natural class limit. Their churches are mainly supported by the lower middle class found largely in the streets pink barred

with red; with the working class (pure pink) their difficulties begin; and in the very few streets that show a really poor element (blue) all religious efforts fail here as elsewhere.

The Wesleyans say that this neighbourhood is good for Methodism, and their success would seem to prove it. It has been already referred to in our notes upon Battersea. Beginning with a small temporary iron building, into which three hundred people could with difficulty be crowded, they have built and recently opened, in the very midst of the new streets, a large and beautiful church, and bid fair to fill it with worshippers. Many of these are very keen; some attend 'every time the door is opened,' so frequently, indeed, that 'perhaps home duties suffer.' All the usual elements of Wesleyan congregational life are here in full activity, and their young minister is a strong spiritual force amongst them. Youthfulness is a characteristic of this congregation as it is of the surrounding population, and the large number of newly-married couples is again mentioned.

The Baptists are no less successful. They are longer established, and have a full church, but the movement of population causes a constant change in the individuals composing it. Some of their people come from further off, but in the main they are drawn from the same streets as the Wesleyans, and consist of 'middle, lower middle and working class, clerks, City people, &c.' 'All live comfortably, but not half a dozen could spare a £10 note.' They are, however, willing to pay for their religion, and since 1892 have reduced the debt on the chapel by £3000 (from £5000 to £2000). Their minister speaks confidently of the prospects of religious work generally in the district and of the large proportion of the population that is reached: numbering in their own case certainly as many as two thousand five hundred all told, 'and ours

is only one.' And he is confident that the Churches will succeed if they devote themselves to the spiritual needs of the people. A little Strict Baptist church has also secured a very respectable congregation. These Churches are all successful and contented ; it is only when, leaving their own ground, they try what can be done for the inhabitants of one or two poor streets, which form the hunting ground of their mission work, that they feel depression.

The vicar of St. Michael's Church noted the continual shifting of the population in this district and the result of this in a general levelling (both up and down) towards the lower middle class. This change has not greatly affected attendance at his church, but does affect it financially. The story is told by the coins in the offertory : copper increases while silver decreases, and gold is seldom seen. The church is rarely more than half full. It is robbed of those who consider fashion by the smarter churches, St. Luke's and St. Mark's ; and cannot compete for hereditary Nonconformists with their own churches. Nor amongst those who are retained is much zeal shown, nor any strong innate religious feeling. Again we hear that you might count on your fingers those who are deeply attached. It seems that those left to the care of the Church are a residuum. Amongst them are a good many unsatisfactory people : people who for some reason have come down in the world. The clergy, when visiting, find many closed doors.

It is to be noted that the change of tone as to the prospects of religion occurs just where the colour on our map changes from pink-barred to pink ; and we find it still more strongly marked in the account given us by the Methodist Free Church, which is situated quite amongst the pink. 'A splendid building, but wrongly placed,' says its minister, who in describing the surrounding people puts comfortable working class

first as the main element, though there are also some clerks and others who find their employment north of the Thames in the City or in the locality of the Strand.

To arrest the attention of the working class this Methodist church caters to the demand for popular entertainments, but though these may keep people away from public-house or theatre on week-days, they do not increase the Sunday congregations. 'The religious faculty is not much developed,' and the growth of Sunday visiting, which marks the strength of their home life, acts as a hindrance to religious observance. The pianos are going on Sunday evening; and, in explanation of non-appearance, even church-going people will say, 'We had so-and-so come to see us.' In this case also it is found difficult to reach the people in their homes. Those who go on behalf of the Church are not always welcomed, and do not know at what hour to call.

The Strict Baptist minister, speaking rather as an onlooker, refers to the effort made by people to ape those better off than themselves. People with £100 a year try to do the same as those with £200, and he sees that the result is very injurious socially. It will, I think, be others rather than his own people that he has in mind. He watches the poor, too. His chapel is situated in the poorest street, and the children come to his Sunday school because it is the nearest. None of the parents belong to his own congregation or to any other, and he no doubt hits the nail on the head when he says, 'The people do not appreciate visiting. They don't care to have a lot of parsons prowling about their houses.'

The Salvation Army finds the whole of this district bad for its work: too respectable, on the one hand, and with too great a love of pleasure, on the other. Their congregations consist of their own people, a handful of adherents; they cannot win outsiders. At out-of-door meetings 'the people stand round and

seem interested, but will not follow to the hall.' There are two of these little bands of Salvationists, and their existence is a constant and seemingly quite futile struggle to spread the light of their gospel.

On the north side of Clapham Common the Congregationalists are not less successful than the Wesleyans and Baptists to the west. Their large church in Stormont Road is filled on Sunday both morning and evening, and in it congregational life runs strong. It is to some extent a revival. Though never a failure, this church at first suffered from the social changes going on round it, but learning to accommodate itself to these, now finds a source of strength in the stream of new-comers. Their minister has no reason to complain of indifference or lack of response ; and speaks of the neighbourhood as religious and churchgoing ; and one in which not to go forward is to go back. The Presbyterians, too, though as yet an infant effort hampered by debt on new buildings, are very hopeful. They regard the influx of new comers as good for the cause. Their minister spoke of the people as very domestic in their habits and showing much family affection. Home influence is powerful here, the people have good homes, and spend much of their time in them. With non-churchgoers, Sunday is the day for outings ; and even some churchgoers indulge in long cycle rides, after which they may come to service in the evening. The members of this congregation are better educated than most, and the Church Literary Society flourishes.

St. Mark's has been spoken of as being fashionable, and on that account apt to rob St. Michael's of some of its parishioners. It has a prominent situation, and collects a large congregation from all round. The church, which is 'free and open,' is well filled on Sunday morning, and packed full for the evening service, and the communicants at Easter number over five hundred.

The difficulty of getting to know who the people are is again mentioned. Visiting can only be attempted in a few of the poorer streets. Elsewhere it would not be welcomed. There is, however, here also a remarkable Church Literary Society with about four hundred members, which must be a considerable help. The average attendance at its meetings is as much as two hundred. This is on the whole a happy and successful church.

St. Barnabas, standing at the north-west corner of the Common, also obtains full congregations, and is the centre of much religious activity. It is a large and rather striking church, newly built of stone, and is regarded as a pillar of Protestantism amidst the surrounding Ritualism, for to this complexion has Clapham come in our days.

Except at the Church of the Ascension already described, and at one branch of the old parish church of Clapham, the ritual cannot be called extreme ; but it is sufficient and sufficiently pervading to be noticeable as a reaction from the Evangelicalism of the past. This reaction goes beyond Ritualism and reaches to the gates of Rome ; for Clapham is one of the greatest centres of Catholicism in London. Not only is there a very large congregation at the Church of Our Lady of Flowers in the High Street, and a convent on the Common, but the Catholics have also one or two middle-class schools, occupying the old houses of the Clapham sect, where may have been held some of the first meetings of the Church Missionary Society, or of the Bible Society, a hundred years ago.

The parish church itself (Holy Trinity) where the ritual is purposely kept very moderate, fills a quite peculiar position in the hearts of those who belong to Clapham. It is the mother church, and 'all who formerly belonged, or can by any stretch of imagination be said to belong, to Clapham, come here to be

christened, or married, or churched.' The parish work is active and successful; and the parishioners take an interest in it. The rector is still considered the natural head in many local as well as religious matters. He has under him five or six curates, and those who like lights on the altar, or vestments, may find them at St. Saviour's Chapel-of-Ease or St. Peter's Mission Church.

At Holy Trinity the congregations are large in spite of changes. Old and wealthy Clapham has gone to dwell in Kensington or Surrey, and the new Clapham of £40 householders has moved in from Kennington and elsewhere. Moreover, there is constant movement amongst the occupants of the new streets. The houses are taken on a three years' lease, and moving is thought nothing of. But through all this change and flux the old church holds its place.

It is otherwise with the Nonconformists. In Grafton Square there is a church for many years associated with the pastorate of one of the best known leaders of the Congregational body. This denomination is still fairly strong here; and a wealthy congregation still occupies the beautiful church; but its members are beginning to be somewhat scattered by removal, and intercepted by other churches nearer their homes, so that their numbers dwindle. The changes in the neighbouring population have gone against them, and in this connection the unsettling influence of the three years' lease on Church membership is expressly mentioned. An attempt is made to justify their local existence by mission work among the neighbouring poor, the most successful feature of this being the music, which is the work of a musical enthusiast who devotes himself entirely to it, making it both at church and mission extraordinarily good.

The Baptist church in the same square is also finding this part of Clapham difficult ground. The reasons

given are that Clapham, by which is meant old Clapham, is dead alive, and that its sympathies, so far as they can be moved, are Conservative and Ritualistic and Roman Catholic. Besides which both the Baptist and the Congregationalist churches are in a somewhat out of the way situation in a neighbourhood which is being abandoned to the class of people who let apartments.

There is another church of the Baptist persuasion in Wandsworth Road, very near St. Saviour's, which I have doubted whether to include here, or in St. Paul's parish yet to be described, within the limits of which it actually stands, or to couple it with the Stormont Road Congregational Church, as further illustrating the influence of the stream of new life. It is a church of long standing, and its present minister has occupied the pulpit twenty-seven years. The congregation, though still middle class, is no longer so rich as it was, and though fairly large, is not so numerous as formerly. Congregational life, however, is vigorous. The young people are interested and held. They enjoy music, and take such part in it as they can; but it is still mainly to the sermon that they look: 'They sit up—the attention is braced.' The proportion of men, both young and old, is greater than in most churches; though on the whole it is admitted that the attempt to reach men fails; the poor are not reached at all. 'Men will attend political or socialist meetings; church fails to attract. The poor are visited, cried to at open-air meetings and coaxed—nothing touches them.' Social differences are keenly felt here; the two sets of mothers, for instance, representing chapel and mission, will not sit down together.

The analysis continues: 'It is not only we who fail, everyone does.' 'That those who come to church do not live up to their professions goes for something in explanation, but is not sufficient.' 'However much

we may dislike to admit it, church-going in London denotes a certain height in the social scale.' 'In Scotland the streets round here would be black with churchgoers; here only one or two specks appear in streets containing thousands of people.' Such is the interesting evidence of the successful minister of this active church. From another point of view, that of local government, he speaks of Clapham as very Conservative and slow—and contrasts it with Battersea, which goes to the other extreme in its activity.

St. James's, at the east end of the Common, shares with St. Barnabas, at the north-west, the support of Evangelicals, and gathers a large congregation. It has profited from High Church activity, which, as before noted, whether its special doctrines and practices attract or repel, tends to stimulate religious life all round. The parish has a large and rapidly increasing population, and as the old family houses fall empty new streets are built on their sites. The vicar, who had great gifts both socially and in the pulpit, has lately retired through ill-health. It is said that his congregation included many Nonconformists as well as Evangelical Churchmen.

The work of St. James's among the poor is much criticized as being pauperising in its character. It is centred in White Square, once a notorious den of iniquity and rowdyism, and still bad as well as poor. This is a bit of old Clapham which strikes a very different note from all the rest of the district. The square is an open space, unpaved and uncared for, surrounded by two-storeyed houses in which live a large number of costers. It is isolated, as the only entry to it is by a narrow lane running down hill to the square from Clapham High Street. A Congregationalist church in Park Crescent near by, which was closed for lack of support, is now used by the Free Methodist Connexion as a mission, and the

Sister who visits in White Square and the other poor quarters is disheartened by her lack of success among the pauperised poor.

So ends our picture, from a religious point of view, of the district which lies round Clapham Common. It is on the whole satisfactory, and, in this respect, forms a marked contrast to that which has been drawn of Battersea, or that we shall have to give of Wandsworth and Putney.

§ 2

FROM THE HOME POINT OF VIEW

From the point of view of the home, the story is also satisfactory. 'Home' and 'Church' may often clash, but it is not unfair to place the 'World' in antithesis to both; and the Church should rejoice in the strength of home ties. The main social fact in the growth of any population is the formation of new homes, and the comfort of these homes is the main fact of its well-being. It is a great satisfaction to know that prosperity marks the new homes here where (if we include Battersea, which from this point of view it is necessary to do) their formation has during the last thirty years* been more rapid than anywhere else

	* Increase in No. of Houses.			
	1871-1881	1881-1891	1891-1901	30 years.
Battersea	6,691	6,147	2,710	15,548
Clapham	1,270	1,015	1,533	3,818
Together	7,961	7,162	4,243	19,366
Fulham	2,364	7,052	5,644	15,060
Lewisham	1,303	2,065	5,074	8,442

It will be seen that for the last ten years Fulham and Lewisham lead.

in London. As homes the houses have had the great advantage of being specially built to suit the classes that have occupied them. The object has been to provide self-contained dwellings of from three to seven rooms, each having its own kitchen, scullery and washing copper, and each with its own front and back door. Great ingenuity has been shown, and a type of house has been produced which can be arranged for either one or two families, and which not only fulfils these requirements, but has some external architectural merit; far more, I think, than can be claimed for the contemporary three-storey houses of the class above. A house must be attractive outside as well as in, not only in order to secure the better tenants, but also that finally pride may step in—the pride of the owner in his property and in the character of his tenants, as well as that of the occupier in his home; a pride which caps the economic position, and sustains the good that has been created by thought and art in the pursuit of profit. The force of this advantage is the more evident when we study the reverse, and trace the decadence of property, recklessly built, or unsuccessfully adapted to its present from some other purpose, neither convenient within nor attractive without, in which no one can find pleasure or take pride, and where at length even profit falls to zero.

The system of three-year leases is objected to as unsettling to the lives of the tenants, as well as tending to division of interest between landlord and occupant. But the system has its good points; it fits in with the recurring incidents in the life of a house as well as with the changing circumstances of the occupants. Every three years the rooms require to be papered and painted and done up, and this term is as long as can be looked forward to by most tenants. In three years there may be one or two more children;

in three years there may have been a rise of salary; in three years the elder children may be at work, or gone to live elsewhere, or a son or daughter may be married. It is felt that it is well to be free. The goods and chattels are easily moved, and the pride of home suffers not at all. A removal may be an occasion for some new pieces, but in the main the old furniture serves equally for the new home. Nor under these circumstances does a change of tenant trouble the landlord. If the old tenants stay they require as much to be done as a new one, and in dealing with a new tenant the owner is more free to demand a rise of rent, if this is economically justified. Thus his whole interest lies in maintaining a good character for his property.

It may be thought that I pass too lightly over the unsettling influences of such frequent changes of residence. It will be said that ties, social, political or religious are less likely to be established, and that for a man and his family to be locally known exercises a control upon conduct. But I think these points may easily be exaggerated, especially if the change of locality does not involve any very great distance; that social, political and religious life, if healthy, will stand the strain and suffer nothing by it, and the man be and remain a good citizen as well as a good householder.

The balance upon which this system rests, giving it in spite of constant flux a social stability of its own, is here distinctly connected with, and is perhaps even dependent on, the stream of newcomers, which fills up the gaps as they occur, and carries forward those who float most lightly to 'fresh woods and pastures new,' cut up into convenient streets. But the stream is not essential. The same wholesome results of pride in ownership and in occupancy should arise wherever enterprise, while seeking its own advantage, sets itself

wisely and honestly to provide the houses required for the homes of the people.

In this chapter I treat as Clapham the whole surroundings of the Common, but in so doing depart somewhat from geographical accuracy. Clapham and its High Street lie entirely to the east of the Common, while its north and west sides form portions of Battersea and Wandsworth. Moreover, the Common is like the sea; it may be questioned whether it joins or separates those between whom it lies. In summer it serves as a meeting place, but in winter is a barrier rarely crossed. Thus there have come to be two centres of life. What Clapham High Street, its shops, tram cars and railway stations are to the eastern, St. John's Hill is to the western section. Clapham Junction has become a second and greater Clapham.

The people, too, are different. Those whose centre is Old Clapham have indeed altered greatly from what they were, but it is in the other part that the whole tide of humanity has been felt, changing everything. The facilities of approach are exceptionally great, and these advantages have greatly helped the local spread of population.

The gay and crowded streets at Clapham Junction are one visible result of the surging life of this new population, and here a good deal of vice floats on the surface. Prostitution is rife, and the Commons at night are scenes of disorder. Perhaps when they come to be railed in and recognised as public parks control may be more possible.

§ 3

FROM CLAPHAM TO KENNINGTON

There remain still to be dealt with, a group of parishes which lie between Clapham and Nine Elms and which thus complete the circuit we have made. These form a kind of backwater.

St. John's, the parish immediately to the east of Clapham station, is decadent. The villa population is moving out, houses which were never intended for more than one family are occupied by two, or if by one it is by such as seek to pay their rent by letting lodgings. The poorer residents do not come to the church and its seats are but ill-filled by middle-class people, who are drawn as much from Stockwell as from Clapham. It is a difficult parish, and the Church of England has it to herself. The poor are regularly visited, but others are above visitation and apt to slam the door, and say, 'I am a respectable person.' For the working classes Sunday is a day of rest and inaction; they will not come to church.

The neighbouring parish of St. Paul, lying directly to the north of Holy Trinity, has a much poorer population. The church has been filled by a middle-class congregation coming from far and near, attracted by the eloquence of the incumbent. But in other ways things went wrong. There was a scandal only terminated by resignation.

The Congregationalists of Grafton Square have here the mission already referred to. Those who attend the adult meetings in a regular way are mostly women, and only a few of these come from the surrounding streets, but the mission is useful amongst the children and very active in various ways, and the really excellent music given at the 'Pleasant Wednesday Evening' meeting is appreciated. Their neighbours are invited

and encouraged to come 'just as they are' in their working clothes, and to this service the men like to come.

There is also another mission whose want of success on the spiritual side is very marked. All that can be claimed for it is that others do no better. 'Most of the chapels in the neighbourhood are nearly empty.' 'In the new and highly respectable working-class streets scarcely a soul attends any place of worship.' Again, it is pointed out that no difficulty is ever found in filling 'Tent meetings;' a thousand will attend them; but, it is added, they are nearly all religious people. At this place much is given in the way of free meals, the only limit to the amount distributed being the difficulty of raising funds. Altogether we seem to have returned to the unsatisfactory state of things described in the more central parts of South London.

In Christ Church—where, too, the district is going down socially, and is poorer than it looks, and where indifference to religion is the characteristic feature—extravagance of ritual, 'confessions, masses, processions and everything that is possible,' followed by Kensit riots and other strenuous forms of public notice, have filled the church. It seems to have been a somewhat mad development, and one turns with a sense of repose to the report of the little Strict Baptist Church. "Through mercy we have been spared in peace and unity through another year. Our dear pastor has been enabled to declare with no uncertain sound the Gospel of the grace of God. Congregations at all services have been very good: finances very satisfactory. . . . we hope soon to begin to build a new schoolroom. The pastor's week-night Bible-class is well attended. We thank God, and take courage."

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES. Map S. (Vol. V., Part II., Chapters I. & II.). Battersea and Clapham.

Adjoining Maps—**N.** Westminster and Inner West (Vol. III.); **E.** Outer South (Vol. VI.). **W.** Fulham (Vol. III.) and Wandsworth and Putney (p. 220.).

General Character.—The map comprises the districts of Battersea, Clapham and part of Wandsworth. It is divided into two parts by the London and South Western Railway, which crosses it in a south-westerly direction. This, with the river, Battersea Park, Clapham Common and Wandsworth Common, are the controlling features of the district. The well-to-do cluster round the Commons, the poor are crowded near the railway. A fair number of detached houses with large gardens occupied by the wealthy remain round Clapham Common, but the tendency is for the rich to leave the district, and for their dwellings to be replaced by houses built for and tenanted by the middle and lower middle classes. The colours red, pink barred with red, and pink prevail round Clapham and Wandsworth Commons; the fairly comfortable working class (pink) live between Lavender Hill and the railway and off the west side of Battersea Park, and the poor (blue) chiefly between Battersea Park Road and the railway. The whole district is within easy access of the West End and the City, and is largely tenanted by clerks and managers and West-End shop assistants.

Poverty Areas.—Battersea lying north of the railway is more uniformly poor than Clapham lying to the south. In Battersea poverty is caught and held in successive railway loops south of the Battersea Park Road, beginning with the dark blue and black Ponton Road area lying between the gas-works and the railway, and continuing westwards with six blocks of purple and blue (increasing), with a small (decreasing) area of pink: (1), between Haines Street and Stewart's Road, with only two exits to the South and none either to the East or West; (2), between Palmerston Street and the Latchmere allotments, with only two footways across the railway and an opening westwards along Sheepcote Lane; (3), a small triangle (light blue) lying east of the Latchmere Road; (4), Latchmere Grove (light blue and black) with only a northern exit; (5), between Falcon Road and the railway, pink turning to blue as the railway embankment is reached; and (6), a block between Lavender Road and the railway (purple, blue and black). This is one of the best object-lessons in 'poverty-traps' in London. Apart from these, there are small patches of black and blue in Battersea, such as Orville Road and Europa Place (*vide* p. 162). On the low ground south of the railway, which is hemmed in, though not broken up by lines to the same extent as the land north of the railway, the situation has been saved by the care of the managers of the Shaftesbury and Flower Estates, though the damp clayey soil of this side is less healthy to live on than the brick earth to the North. Further East is a block of light blue on either side of Stewart's Road.

There are besides small blocks of old-established poverty in Clapham, such as those in the Old Town and off Nelson's Row, and less pronounced in Chatham Road between Clapham and Wandsworth Commons.

Employments.—Artisans, mechanics, labourers, clerks, and shop assistants working in the West End live in large numbers in Battersea. Many railway guards, signalmen, platelayers, and porters, both live and work in the district, others go to more central stations in London. The workshops of the South Western and the South Eastern and Chatham railways also provide employment for large numbers of mechanics and labourers, most of whom live near the works on the eastern side of the

district, as do many shunters, porters, and others employed in the Nine Elms Goods' Depôt. On the western side local work is provided by a candle factory and plumbago and crucible works, as well as at large stables of the London Road Car Company. There are also large baking and confectionery works. A strong theatrical and music-hall contingent comes from the roads between Clapham and Wandsworth Commons. The poorest are gasworkers, soapworkers, scavengers, coalies, wood-choppers, and costers; the richest are City merchants, both active and retired. For women there is work on the north side of the river at the Government clothing factory in Pimlico, as charwomen in Chelsea houses, and as shop assistants; in Battersea women are employed in cigar and pencil, soap and candle factories, and in laundries.

Housing and Rents.—The older working-class houses north of the railway are fairly built of yellow brick with two storeys, and tenanted generally by two families. Near Battersea Park new red brick flats prevail. South of the railway there are the large old-fashioned houses round Clapham Common, and behind them endless streets of new houses let on the three-year system (*vide* p. 187). North of Lavender Hill are the working-class estates already mentioned. There are colonies of gipsies living in their vans in Sheepcote Lane and Latchmere Grove. The worst conditions are found in the Ponton Road area (*vide* p. 150), in Little Europa Place and Orville Road (*vide* p. 162). Middle-class flats in the neighbourhood of Battersea Park are rented at from £45 to £100. Rents of the best old houses round Clapham Common, and even of middle-class residences, have fallen. The fine gardens of Eagle House are already nearly covered by three hundred houses built for the 'pink' and 'pink-barred' classes.

The prevailing type of house occupied by the poor is of two storeys, with a frontage of 14 ft. to 16 ft., with four to six rooms, built to accommodate two families, and rented at 10*s* to 14*s*. Single rooms fetch 2*s* 6*d* to 3*s*, but the majority live in two rooms at about 4*s* 6*d* to 5*s* 6*d*. Rents were still rising in 1898.

Markets.—The chief shopping streets for the middle and lower middle classes are High Street, Clapham, Lavender Hill, and St. John's Road. The chief market streets are Battersea Park Road, York Road, Wandsworth Road (near New Road) and Northcote Road.

Public-Houses.—Public-houses, beerhouses, off 'jug' licences, and grocers' licences are fairly distributed over the portion of the map lying east of Wandsworth Road Station. They also mark the line of Battersea Park Road and Wandsworth Road throughout; jug licences and grocers' licences are more numerous in proportion to full licences and beer-licences as the more modern districts to the west are reached. The older parts of Battersea lying between High Street, the river, and St. John's Hill, are also well supplied with licenced houses; in the new district lying south of Clapham Common, licences of any kind are rare. In new areas 'jug' licences replace beerhouses as the mark of poor or working class areas and grocers' licences mark the shopping streets of the well-to-do.

Places of Amusement.—The best known theatres are the 'Shakespeare' on Lavender Hill, and the 'Duchess' on Balham Hill, just off the map; there is also the 'Queen's Theatre in Queen's Road, and a few Variety Halls. Both the 'Shakespeare' and 'Duchess' are of comparatively recent construction, and reflect a general increase in the demand for amusement.

Open Spaces.—Battersea Park, Clapham Common and Wandsworth Common are large open spaces, and the 'lungs' of the Western half of South London. They become increasingly valuable as the large private gardens disappear and their place is taken by rows of modern houses, with very little air space at their backs.

Health is good except in the low-lying poor areas between Battersea Park Road and the London and South-Western Railway. North of the railway the ground is of gravel and brick earth; whilst to the south a broad band of clay runs from Nine Elms Westwards between the railway and Wandsworth Road. Clapham Common is on gravel, but the land between it and Wandsworth Common is of London clay.

Changes in Population.—The 'red' and 'yellow' classes are leaving, and the streets which they occupied are becoming 'pink' and 'pink-barred'; whilst streets which were formerly 'pink' turn to 'purple,' and 'purple' to 'light blue.' The fairly comfortable 'pink' who not long ago lived north of the railway in Battersea have moved to the Lavender Hill and Northcote Road districts, and have been replaced by poor from Chelsea and Westminster; the servant-keeping classes ('red') of Clapham have moved either out of London altogether or to the new houses and flats in more central London, and their places taken by the fairly comfortable out of Kennington, South Lambeth and Stockwell. The law of successive migration is again seen. Here the inrush of population has been helped by the extension of the City and South London Electric Railway to Clapham Common. On the west side of the Common there is a continual shifting in a westerly direction, leading to a general level of lower middle in place of middle-classes.

Means of Communication.—The effect on part of this district of the want of means of communication by roads has been referred to under 'Poverty areas.' Clapham Junction, on the west side of the map, is a great railway centre: from it it is possible to reach West and North London *viâ* Addison Road, inner West London at Victoria, inner South London at Waterloo and London Bridge, the City north of the river at Holborn and the Mansion House; while communication both South and West is equally good by local direct lines to Richmond, Wimbledon, Streatham and Norwood. The east side of the district is served by the South London line and the Metropolitan Extension of the London and Chatham Railway with three stations, as also by the City and South London Electric Railway at the east end of the Common, which now offers a through route *viâ* the Mansion House to Islington. Very slow horse tramways run from Vauxhall on the east along Battersea Park Road and Wandsworth Road into Wandsworth; another line from inner South London comes along the Clapham Road and thence westwards down Balham Hill into Lower Tooting. A line from the south side of the Victoria Bridge gives communication between Chelsea and Lavender Hill. What is wanted:—(1) The opening of roads between Battersea north and south of the railway lines; (2) a bridge across the river at the west end of Surrey Lane giving access to Fulham; (3) the extension of electric trams from Clapham along the north side of the Common to Wandsworth and Kingston; (4) direct communication with North London by electric tram across one of the bridges into Chelsea. The electrification of the tram lines under the L. C. C. is already in progress.

PLACES OF WORSHIP.

List of Parish Churches situated in the district covered by Sketch Map No. 20, and described in Part II., Vol. V., with other PLACES OF WORSHIP grouped in their ecclesiastical parishes.

All Saints, Battersea Park.
All Saints' Miss., Arthur St.
Bapt. Tab., Battersea Pk. Rd.
U. Meth. Free Ch., Battersea Park Rd.
Ch. of Christ, Railway Arch, Battersea Park Rd.
Railway Miss., Battersea Pk. Rd.
Miss. Room, 1, Park Grove.
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel (R. C.), Battersea Park Rd.

All Saints, Clapham Park.
All Saints' Inst., Lyham Rd.
Salem Bapt. Ch., New Park Rd.
Old Bapt. Union Hall, Lyham Rd.
Baptist Ch., Cornwall Rd.
Salv. Army Barr., Cornwall Rd.
L.C. Miss. Hall, 197, Lyham Rd.

All Saints, Wandsworth.
Holy Trinity, West Hill.
Memorial Hall (Cong.), High St.
Bapt. Ch., Haldon Rd.
Presb. Ch., Lebanon Gardens.
Down Lodge Hall, Merton Rd.

Caius College Miss., Harraway Rd.
Battersea Tabernacle (Bapt.), York Rd.
Yelverton Miss., 22, Yelvert'n Rd.

Christ Church, Battersea.
Christ Ch. Miss. Ho., 48, Wye St.
Christ Ch. Miss., Latchmere Rd.
Milton Hall (Cong.), Cabul Rd.
Brethren's Meeting Room, 122, High St.
Mitchener Temp. Hall, Lithgow St.
Offord Hall, Mantua St.
R. S. U. Hall, Railway Arches, Cabul Rd.
Salv. Army Barracks, High St.
Shaftesbury Hall (Salv. Army), Dorothy Rd.

Christ Church, Clapham.
Zion's Hill Bapt. Ch., Courland Grove.
Wesl. Miss., Clifton St.
Howard Street Miss., New Rd.

Holy Trinity, Clapham.
St. Saviour's, Cedar's Rd.
St. Peter's Miss. Ch., Manor St.
St. Anne's Hall, Bromell's Rd.
Cong. Ch., Grafton Square.
Belmont Hall (Cong.), Belmont Rd.
Bapt. Ch., Grafton Square.
Ebenezer Bapt. Ch., Wirtemburg St.
Carfax Hall (Breth.), Carfax Sq.
Bible Christ. Ch., Wirtemb'rg St.
Salv. Army Hall, 3, Chip St.
L. C. Miss. Hall, Bromell's Rd.
St. Mary (R.C.), Claph'm Pk. Rd.

Holy Trinity, Roehampton.
Miss. Hall, Medfield St.
St. Joseph (R. C.), Roehampton Lane.

St. Andrew, Battersea.
St. Andrew's Miss., Stewart's Rd.
Prim. Meth. Chapel, New Rd.
Trin. Hall (Pres.), Stewart's Rd.
Excelsior Miss., Linford St.

St. Andrew, Earlsfield.
St. Andrew's Miss., Bendon Vall.
St. Andrew's Miss., Earlsfield Rd.
Earlsfield Cong. Ch., Earlsfield Rd.
Cong. Hall, Thornsett Rd.
Earlsfield Bapt. Ch., Magdalen Rd.
Bapt. Miss., Wardley St.
Home Miss., Garratt Lane.
Earlsfield Gos. Hall, Garratt Lne.

St. Anne, Wandsworth.
Cong. Ch., East Hill.
Wesl. Miss., South Street.
Prim. Meth. Ch., High Street.
Friends' Meeting House, 31, High Street.
Bramblebury Hall, Bramblebury Gardens.
L. C. Miss., 14, South Street.
Salv. Army Hall, South Street.

St. Barnabas, Clapham Common.
St. Matthew's, Rush Hill Road.
Cong. Ch., Stormont Road.
Presb. Ch., Altenburg Gardens.

St. Faith, Wandsworth.
St. Cecilia's Miss., Warple Way.
Bapt. Ch., East Hill.
Wesl. Ch., St. John's Hill.
Wesl. Miss., North Street.
Unitarian Ch., St. John's Hill.

St. George, Nine Elms.
St. George's Miss., New Road.
St. James's Miss. Ch., Ponton Rd.
Wesl. Miss., New Road.
Salv. Army Slum Post, 3, Ponton Road.

St. James, Clapham Park.
St. James's Miss., White Sq.
Wesl. Ch., High Street.
U. Meth. Free Ch., Park Cres.

St. John, Battersea.
St. Paul's, St. John's Hill.
St. John's Miss., Britannia Pl.
Eltringham Miss. (Cong.), 264, York Rd.
Prim. Meth. Ch., Plough Rd.
Railway Miss. Hall, Plough Rd.

St. John, Clapham Rise.
Gilead Miss. Hall, York Terrace

St. Luke, Nightingale Lane.
Wesl. Ch., Broomwood Road.

St. Mark, Battersea Rise.
Welsh Ch., Beauchamp Road.

St. Mary, Battersea.
St. Mary-le-Park, Albert Road.
Cong. Ch., Bridge Road.
Surrey Lane Bapt. Ch., Battersea Square.
Old Bapt. Union Miss., 181, Bridge Rd.
U. Meth. Free Ch., Church Rd.
Wesl. Ch., Bridge Road West.
L. C. Miss. Room, 45, Surrey Lane.
Victoria Hall, 104, High Street.
Sacred Heart of Jesus (R. C.), Trott Street.

St. Mary, Putney.
St. John Evangel., Putney Hill.
All Saints', Putney Lower Com.
St. Mary's Miss., Cooper's Arms Lane.
Cong. Ch., Oxford Road.
Union Ch., Up. Richmond Rd.
Bapt. Ch., Werter Road.
Wesl. Ch., Upper Richmond Rd.
Presb. Ch., Briar Walk.
Prim. Meth. Ch., Coopers' Arms Lane.
Emmanuel Free Church of England, Upper Richmond Rd.
L. C. Miss. Hall, The Platt.
Sefton Miss., Sefton Street.

St. Michael, Wandsworth Common.
Bapt. Ch., Northcote Road.
Bapt. Ch., Chatham Road.
U. Meth. Free Ch., Mallinson Rd.
Bennerley Hall (Salv. Army), Bennerley Rd.
Wesl. Miss., Broomwood Rd.

St. Michael, Southfields.
St. Michael's Parish Room, Merton Rd.
Granville Pres. Miss., Balvernie Grove.

St. Paul, Clapham.
St. Paul's Miss., Heath Rd.
Cong. Miss., Queen's Place.
Victoria Bapt. Ch., Wandsworth Rd.
Bapt. Miss., Renshaw St.
Union Tabernacle, Wandsworth Rd.
L. C. Miss. Hall, Grange Rd.

St. Paul, Wimbledon Park.
St. Barnabas' Miss. Ch., Merton Rd.
Southfield's Bapt. Ch. Merton Rd.

St. Peter, Battersea.
Providence Bapt. Ch., Meyrick Rd.
Speke Hall (Pentecostal League), Speke Rd.
Oake Mis. Rm., 139, Plough Rd.

St. Philip, Battersea.
St. Bartholomew's, Wycliffe Rd.
St. Philip's Mis., Portslade Rd.
Wesl. Ch., Queen's Rd.
Salv. Army Barr., Queen's Rd.
Prot. Mis. Ch., Queen's Rd.

St. Saviour, Battersea.
Brethren's Meeting Room, Doddington Grove.
Shaftesbury Welcome Hall (R.S.U.), Doddington Grove.

St. Stephen, Battersea.
St. Aldwin's Hall, Poyntz Rd.

St. Stephen, Wandsworth.
St. Stephen's Miss. Ch., Putney Bridge Rd.
St. Stephen's, Point Pleasant.
St. Thomas (R. C.), West Hill.

The Ascension, Lavender Hill.
Prim. Meth. Ch., Grayshott Rd.

ST MARY
Battersea

ALL SAINTS

ST GEORGE
Nine Elms

ALL SAINTS
S.Lambeth

ST ANDREW

ST SAVIOUR
Battersea Park

ST STEPHEN

CAIUS
MISSION

CHRIST CHURCH

ST PHILIP

CHRIST CHURCH

ST
BARTHOLOMEW

THE ASCENSION
Lavender Hill

ST PAUL

ST PETER

ST BARNABAS
Clapham Common

ST MARK
Battersea Rise

HOLY TRINITY

ST MICHAEL
Wandsworth Common

ST LUKE
Battersea

ST JAMES

THE ASCENSION
Balham

CHAPTER III

WANDSWORTH AND PUTNEY

§ 1

THE VALLEY OF THE WANDLE

Speaking of the general tendency towards a poorer level in Battersea, one of the Poor Law relieving officers mentioned the special increase of poverty and overcrowding which occurred there some three years ago, owing to migration following on evictions in Chelsea. But now, he says, the movement of the poorest is to the valley of the Wandle where building of a vile character is progressing, involving inevitably the creation of new slum areas. This is only too true. Poverty and low life, which in the preceding chapters we traced mainly along the borders of the Thames, turn southward at the Wandle river, and then follow the course of this little stream as far as Summerstown and Lower Tooting, after which, there is, indeed, still poverty, but it lies beyond the London boundary.

Southward of the railway, and eastward as the ground rises from the bed of the stream towards Wandsworth Common, poverty gives way to well being, and even to wealth. It is this mixed population that I have now to describe. Its religious activity takes the shape, very largely, of missionary efforts competing with each other, not without mutual recrimination,

in the service of the godless poor. "Little love is lost" between church and chapel, or chapel and chapel, says one who himself works independently and with some success. There is much competition in giving. We have been told in more than one quarter that 'soup is no longer acceptable,' and at the same time we hear again from more than one witness, that as to spiritual aims, mission work is becoming more difficult and the people more indifferent. The efforts made are proportionately great, and apply (as does the indifference also) not alone to the degraded casual poor, but to the whole motley crowd of new-comers, who arrive in such numbers that in spite of all that is done, the proportion of church accommodation to population is less than it was ten years ago. But the regular churches and chapels are only fairly filled and the mission services are mostly neglected.

St. Faith's, All Saints', St. Anne's and St. Andrew's are the parishes, the first having a fairly settled population and position, the last lying beyond the southern limit of our map in the midst of new building and rapid changes.

Upon the very shifting element that continually passes through St. Faith's—here one day and gone the next—the Church can exert little or no influence; but the permanent residents are visited assiduously, and it is claimed that a larger percentage than usual attend the church or mission hall, and also that they show the results in changed lives.

In the mission hall there are purely secular entertainments, which are crowded, while semi-social, semi-religious meetings are held for men, which conclude with coffee and tobacco and are not more than semi-successful. A good deal of charitable relief is given—judiciously, the givers say, but others affirm the reverse.

All Saints' parish includes a rich district towards

Wimbledon Park, and for this there is a chapel-of-ease on West Hill, Putney. This rich man's church is well attended, and is a gold mine from which funds are drawn for all the poorer churches round, especially for the work carried on in its own parish on the lower ground, where stands the old and still picturesque village of Wandsworth, almost imbedded now in new building. As usual with the old villages, there are here a large number of small beer-houses, and these are the scene of much drinking and some fighting. The village contains a good deal of poverty, partly of the old cottage-type, and partly consisting of low and disreputable newcomers, a shifting set, occupying common lodging-houses or tenements. In the new streets which are situated midway between the low-lying parts and West Hill, there is a large and growing element of clerks with small means and others, such as theatrical or music-hall people. Altogether it is a rather difficult population for Church work, and, amongst the mass, little success can be claimed. Nevertheless, a quite large and respectable congregation gathers, morning and evening, in the quaint old eighteenth century church, so much so that a new portion is being added to it (1900).

St. Anne's, Wandsworth, is an extensive and actively worked parish, gathering a large middle-class congregation as the result of one incumbent's work; for previously the huge church was empty. Yet the results are not altogether satisfactory, as the middle class, though needing religion badly to help 'dull, pinched lives,' are difficult to reach, and the cleavage between them and the poor is even greater than that which comes between poor and rich. The poor do not attend the services at the church nor are they found at the mission-room. A mission church is to be built. I shall speak later of the work of the Nonconformists here.

Further on up the valley of the Wandle, as we approach the southern boundary of London, the Church of England was first in the field, but the Baptists have now built a church—not a mission hall —which promises success. In this region soup is not yet rejected by the poor, and the parish church provides it in large quantities. 'Certainly it pauperises the people' (said the vicar), 'but we get hold of them in this way. It is worth the risk,' and he speaks of the charitable funds at their disposal as the 'saving of a poor parish like this.'

The vicar analyzes his people, and then considers what the motives are that bring to church such of them as come. He distinguishes various classes of parishioners: (1) the very poor and the vicious: labourers and costers, gipsies, thieves and prostitutes; (2) the rather poor: builders' labourers and those working at market gardening; (3) a mixture in certain streets of artisans and labourers; (4) the fairly comfortable: clerks and artisans; and (5) at the top, some business men, but not the heads of businesses.

Large numbers go by train to their work; thirteen hundred before eight o'clock in the morning, by the workmen's trains; the clerks between eight and nine; and the few privileged ones an hour later. All return between six and nine in the evening.

Among these people some, he says, attend church from habit or fashion, some from loyalty to the parson, some for what they can get, and some because of what they have been taught. The first and last reasons produce the greatest numbers. Those who have the habit, or think it still the fashion to go to church, are new-comers from the country. Those that have been taught came, as children, under the influence of his predecessor, and have been retained. The bulk never attend at either church or chapel, unless it can be counted to them as an attendance if they stand for

a while on the fringe of one of the numerous outdoor services that are held in this neighbourhood. The preceding analysis of the people, and the motives that bring a section of them to church, will apply not to his parishioners alone, but to the whole district.

The gipsy poor, as a floating population, have long been here. They come to church to be married and on a recent Whit Sunday the church was crowded for a gipsy wedding. But they never come at other times.

The Baptists, Wesleyans, and Congregationalists all have large and prosperous congregations in Wandsworth, their three places of worship being on East Hill and its continuations, where there is a perfect string of churches of all denominations. These churches, and especially that of the Baptists, are still vigorous, though no longer thronged as was the case before the advent of the new population brought about the partial departure of the old. In their efforts to evangelize the neighbouring poor, and to supply the supposed religious needs of the incoming people, they have built mission hall after mission hall, and their young people stand up to sing, and preach, and pray at the corners of the streets. 'The results are not easy to trace.' The people are found 'very difficult to move.' 'Small clerks and City people are almost more stubborn and difficult to reach than the working classes. They make Sunday a day of pleasure simply, and are off rowing and cycling. They won't be visited, and they can't be missionized. They would look upon an open-air service in their street as an insult.' Not that they are 'bad people,' but that they have 'ceased to reckon with the non-material side of life.' The Baptists have one of these missions, the Wesleyans two, and the Congregationalists three. The activities of even the Presbyterian Church are expended largely upon mission work amongst the neighbouring poor, and they, too, speak of the 'godless middle class,' and recognise

the unsatisfactory character of the work of their own and other Churches. The candid avowal by one, that 'the mission services are not well attended, and (even so) chiefly by women, and only kept up by constant attention,' applies, I believe, equally to all.

The Presbyterian visitors are strictly forbidden to suggest attendance at church as a return for relief, but the good ladies cannot be prevented from giving shillings, and, on the whole, there is a good deal of 'competition in giving,' and of 'subsidy by way of relief,' while a special point is made of there being 'no collection,' out of regard for those who 'cannot afford to pay for their religion.' The whole state of affairs appears to be summed up in the words of one witness, 'appalling bribery,' and in truth most of this mission work bears the character of galvanized activity without one spark of vitality. Not after this fashion will spiritual destitution ever be met. In printed reports results are claimed which cannot be substantiated; and it could hardly be otherwise, for to fail touches the honour of religion, and to put the best possible face on the matter is very natural. Unless it be used for purposes of begging, such 'economy of truth' is, perhaps, even excusable, but to us in conversation the admissions of failure have been unusually frank.

The Baptist congregation consists of (1) middle class (the leaders); (2) clerks, and others comfortably off (the bulk); and (3) working class (a considerable section). The Congregationalist Church is strong and rich, with a history which goes back to the sixteenth century. Both it and the Wesleyan Church stand socially higher than do the Baptists, and rely mainly on their missions for keeping in touch with the people.

In this respect the Wesleyans claim special success with their children's penny-banks, the savings in which revolutionize the dress of the children, and enable

them to pay their quota towards holiday expenses. There is also a 'step-girls'' club, with no less than eighty members, all employed in this form of service for the servantless, which throws a good deal of light on the social character of the district.

The Primitive Methodists have a chapel, and the Friends a characteristically neat little meeting-house, standing side by side in the High Street, and there is also a Unitarian church, of which the regular members are middle class or wealthy, but which attracts a fair gathering of thoughtful working-class people on Sunday evening by the merits of the addresses given by the minister, who has been seventeen years at this post. The Salvation Army is likewise represented here, its corps consisting of working-class people, not the poorest. It is described as being most successful with 'those who have slipped down.'

In addition there are several independent Missions, but they exhibit no special features, and attain no great success. One only stands apart from the rest as being not so much a mission as a private-venture church. A man of business, a man of some means, a writer of poems and stories and articles in the Nonconformist papers, a man who, beginning as an amateur, has become a past-master in the art and practice of preaching, and has stood up in pulpits of almost all denominations: such is the leader and creator of the church which goes by the name of Bramblebury Hall. The situation for this hall was chosen as being in the centre of a new district, as yet insufficiently served. This preacher and writer himself designed and found the funds to build 'his beautiful hall,' and opened it without other preparation. 'Here is a hall,' he said in effect, 'here are my services, come if you like'—and they came. He preaches 'the Bible only,' and his congregation is drawn from those who live in the surrounding streets. They are civil

servants, retired or active shopkeepers, commissioned or salaried commercial travellers—men who easily keep up appearances, to whom respectability is no effort, and whose black coat covers no starvation. Amongst them young married couples abound. Those come to him who shun High Church or, indeed, any form of ritual, and share his intolerance of those 'to whom' (as they put it) 'the Bible is nothing.' Yet the Church of England, for the reason that it is so strong, is more friendly to him than are the chapels, who 'question his authority,' although, as he says, 'each one of us speaks with authority as he has it from above.' His neighbours, however, appear to draw some fine distinctions between the church and the man, being willing to recognise the latter, but not the former. His people, thinking that all invocation of God should be spontaneous, carry their dislike to ritual to the point of objecting to a 'fixed prayer' in the morning services. A definite position of this kind held collectively, would seem to stamp this body of worshippers as a 'Church'; that is, as something more than an 'audience.' Be it Church or audience, the working classes do not seem to be represented in it. The poor are not touched at all.

To learn about the poor and their homes, and still more to gain any idea of the lives of the low rough characters who congregate in the valley of the Wandle, it is best to go to the City missionaries who visit from house to house. In the case I have in mind, the missionary makes the round of his district in five months. His habit is to start at ten in the morning, and he gives five hours each day to visiting. His district is not a very low one; the class of people in it being bricklayers, carpenters, plasterers and their labourers, for 'never was there such a place for present and prospective building.' He himself has been at work here seven years, but for seventeen years before

he came the district had been systematically visited. With him there were at first twelve houses which refused admittance, but hostility has completely broken down and all now receive him kindly. The majority are indifferent to religion, and when inside a house he has to spend a long time over the private joys and sorrows of the family before he 'can get a word in for the Lord.' On washing days he cannot enter; at most he can 'leave a thought.' The woman comes out covered with soap-suds, which she wipes off to shake hands. 'No time for *me*, I see, to-day, Mrs. Brown, so I won't come in, but just think of this over the wash-tub. You are washing the *clothes*, but there is a text that says "wash *me*, and I shall be whiter than snow."'

At his Sunday services in the open-air a good many men listen, and one or two who have been converted are now themselves among the speakers. Even those who do not believe tolerate his meetings, and will not let them be disturbed by outsiders. He ascribes his success in dealing with working men to 'witty repartee and sanctified common sense.' The service in his mission hall consists of 'a prayer, jolly hymns, an address and a chapter of the Word.' The usual excuse for non-attendance is 'look at my clothes guv'nor,' and his answer is 'you'd soon enough have clothes if you wanted them; try giving up a pot of beer per day.'

For men he considers three quarts a day not unusual among builders' labourers; which at 4*d* a quart would be 1*s* a day. Such a one he would call a heavy drinker, but not a drunkard. He says he knows quite two hundred from his district who absorb their twelve half pints on Sunday.

Another missionary concentrates his influence on a small district, which he traverses in six weeks. To extend his area would be, he says, 'no comfort to him,

nor help to those he visits.' He has in this district two colonies of gipsies, costers, flower sellers, and the like. In Summer the gipsies go to fairs, and before the start for Epsom in the Derby week the place is a pandemonium. The houses are many of them owned by the richer members of the clan; and room is found for vans, with wheels or without, in which the poorer members crowd. The gipsies regard their quarters as their castle. They never lack food.

Apart from the gipsies the inhabitants of the low streets are described as door-step cleaners, hog-wash gatherers, labourers, drunkards, and loose characters. The landlords' agents are not particular about character; rent is paid irregularly and evictions are frequent, the goods being put into the street.

This missionary, making a comparison with Westminster where he was stationed for twenty years, describes Wardley Street as being worse than any part of Westminster *is*, but not worse than it *was*, and adds, that here there is growing up, and being manufactured, a class like that which was to be found in the slums of Westminster twenty years ago. He recognises some of them as the very same people, while others have come from Chelsea and Battersea, but considers that the bulk have been reared on the spot.

Wardley Street and Lydden Grove are perhaps the worst of these low streets, and our own notes concerning the former read: "Houses two-storeyed, most of them flush with the pavement; a low common lodging-house on one side and a yard full of wheelless gipsy vans on the other, each inhabited by a family. There is throughout the street a family to almost every room, and a great number of loafers hang about at the corner—men who work either not at all, or only on market days (Fridays and Saturdays)."

§ 2

PUTNEY

The low land on the western bank of the Wandle is practically unbuilt upon as far as Merton Road, and the few streets that have crept on to it share in some degree the character of those that have been built on the opposite side of the stream. As the land rises towards Putney Heath so the inhabitants rise in the social scale. The parishes of St. Stephen, St. Michael and St. Paul (with St. Barnabas) are remarkable for their admixture of classes, all sections being represented, from 'dowager duchess to fourpenny dosser,' and even in a single road 'one end may be wealthy, and the Church be giving relief at the other.' The vicar of St. Michael took a complete census of his parish, going himself into every house, and found one hundred and sixty two families keeping servants, one hundred and twenty-three without servants, living in houses of £25 average rental, and five hundred and thirty-nine more accommodated in two hundred and forty-nine tenements of one to four rooms each. Of the families with servants, thirty-six attended the fashionable church of Holy Trinity belonging to All Saints' parish (which is on the hill just above), thirty-four came to him at their own parish church, twenty-four went to St. Stephen's, and seven to St. Paul's; fifty-four belonged to various Nonconformist Churches, and seven were Roman Catholics. He thus accounts for every one of the one hundred and sixty-two 'servant keeping' families, and we must suppose that amongst them there would be some with whom pleasure had the upper hand of piety, and whose members, or at any rate many of them, would be only nominal adherents of any Church.

As to the families without servants, no particulars are given, perhaps accurate information could not be

obtained, but he sums up the position by saying that 'churches and sermons alone are no good. It is like pouring water on a duck's back. Practical sympathy and friendship with the people in their homes is the only way to win sympathy for the Church.' It is with this aim that he has visited every house, and by these means that he has succeeded in fairly filling the church he has built, towards the cost of which he obtained some support from the poorer people as well as from the rich. His success is entirely parochial in character, and those who respond must come to the church; no mission service is attempted.

The large congregation at St. Stephen's is Evangelical rather than parochial, being mainly drawn from those who abjure the High Church practices in some of the adjacent parishes. An attempt is made to reach the poor by a mission church, and a few of them are attracted in this way, but much is given—'too much,' as the vicar admits. Taking the parish as a whole, the 'great and growing neglect of Sunday observance,' is noted, and of this river parties, golf, cycling, &c., are regarded, not as the causes, but the symptoms, although they are specially prevalent here owing to the opportunities which this district offers.

In the southernmost of these three parishes the work is curiously divided; the church of St. Paul catering for the rich, and relying for success on good music, short sermons, 'moderate' ritual, and a beautiful church; while St. Barnabas is the mission church, the hours of service being shared between the two. The rich, as a rule, only come in the morning; but, if earnest church-goers, taking early communion, will come twice. The evening service at St. Paul's has thus been abandoned, because no one came to it; and 'evensong,' now at four p.m., is 'sadly empty.' On the other hand, at St. Barnabas no one came to morning

service, and it has been given up, whereas for evensong (at seven), the place is 'about full.' There is here no lack of good visitors and helpers. The district is thoroughly visited on behalf of the church, and a good deal seems to be given by the visitors both in kind and in money. To compete with the public-houses the Church has established a working-man's club, in which drink is supplied. Music and dancing are allowed, and the club is open on Sunday; but no drink is sold then till after seven p.m. There are one hundred and thirty members, and the subscription is 10*s* 6*d* per annum. This club does not quite pay its way.

There seem to be no Nonconformist churches of any importance in these parishes. Fair numbers go to neighbouring chapels, but there is not any 'commanding personality' amongst the Nonconformist ministers of the vicinity, and so the Church of England occupies the field. One little unsectarian mission there is, carried on by 'a band of workers who for love of the work and the welfare of their fellow-men and women devote their time and energy' to this cause; and there is a rather remarkable Roman Catholic mission church which from one of the poorest has become one of the richest in London. It was founded fifty years ago to care for the poor Irish who worked in the market gardens at Wandsworth. Very few members of the old congregation remain, but two of them became rich, and one of these has paid £20,000 out of his own pocket for the building of the new church, while the other has provided the presbytery.

The church, which is incomplete, will be a fine building when finished. It has taken seven years to reach its present stage, Roman Catholics being more ready to build gradually and more willing to wait, in order that the final result may be a house of God worthy of the name.

Remarking on the peculiarities of Putney, the priest spoke of the old residents who support the Church of England and keep to themselves, and of the new who are only gradually shaking down. Nobody knows who his neighbour is. The old distrust the new, and the new distrust one another. This social difficulty, he claims, affects the Church of England more than the Church of Rome. Rich and poor may attend different churches or come at different hours to the same church, but social barriers ought to be entirely, and with the Catholics to a great extent are, broken down by the sense of equality before God. 'My people,' said the priest, 'have to find out me, not I them. From youth up they are taught their religious duties, which are the same for all; and the primary duty is of the congregation to the Church, not of the Church to the congregation.' This mission was moved into Putney from Wandsworth and the poor do not come so freely as they did. The excuse given is want of clothes. But, the priest says, 'it is really laziness,' and, like the missionary, he tells them to 'drink a little less and they will soon have the clothes.'

From an ecclesiastical standpoint, Putney proper is one large old parish with three churches (St. Mary, St. John, and All Saints), the services of which are arranged to suit various religious tastes; but they are none of them satisfactory to Evangelicals, who either transfer their allegiance to St. Stephen's or support 'Emmanuel Church' belonging to the 'Free Church of England,' a body with very strong anti-Ritualistic and anti-Popery views. In addition, the Nonconformist bodies are here fully represented, and join in the struggle for the souls of pleasure-seeking Putney. The results are, however, most unsatisfactory. Our sources of information are peculiarly full, and of our informants several have done life-long service here: the vicar for forty years, a Congregationalist minister for twenty-five,

and a Presbyterian for twenty-one. The new men are impatient; the old depressed and out of heart. All are, or have been, energetic, each in his own way, and all tell practically the same story: the work is hopeless.

The vicar says, 'As to religion, those who are in front of the tapestry, and can see the general pattern, wlll perhaps be less pessimistic than I who am behind, and notice more the knots and ragged ends;' but he adds that he cannot complain as to his own position in particular, this being 'much like the others.' The three churches maintain on the average the number of their attendants, but the population has grown enormously and the old parish church by the river, where the population is thickest, has lost ground. There is now in the whole parish a population of over twenty thousand, and sufficient unoccupied land to accommodate ten thousand more in two-storey houses.

Spurgeon is said to have spoken of the Thames valley as a district given up to the Devil and High Churchism, and such is the view of the Baptist minister as regards Putney, which he compares very unfavourably with North London, as do all the Nonconformists. The Devil is represented by the sporting and pleasuring element which here seems paramount in the population. The Baptist church, however, secures a small respectable middle-class membership, and quietly goes its way. Its congregation is recruited from South Fulham, where there is a dearth of Free Churches.

The Wesleyans built boldly, and have a large church with a comparatively small congregation of strictly middle-class people, dubbed by others 'rich and exclusive.' Of themselves they say 'Not the aristocrats, nor the poor,' adding, 'We hardly touch the poor at all.' They had mothers' meetings, but no one came; and instead their young people have given 'old people's tea parties,' a great success, though 'enjoyed perhaps most by the givers.' They have open-air services in

Summer on the Heath, to which 'a few stop to listen and then go away,' being 'pleasure seekers.' The Wesleyans are nearly all country-born people who, having acquired the habit of chapel-going in the country, continue it here.

The Presbyterian minister, too, speaks of the 'atmosphere of pleasure-seeking' and 'the low moral level of Putney, though mainly a middle-class district,' and refers to it again as 'a great place for sporting men, and swarming with bookmakers.' 'The churches do not prosper. The middle class here are as indifferent to religious observances as the poor elsewhere.' In one road only two out of twenty-four families, in another only six out of a hundred, could be counted as regular church-goers. 'They may say they attend, but if fine they like a walk, and if it is wet the rain prevents.' And some who may find the Church of England 'too High,' consider the Free Churches 'bad form,' and so slip through and go nowhere. His own congregation comes from a wide area, and is almost exclusively rich. Its members have attempted no mission work, not even a Sunday school, but a 'campaign is to be opened' on the dwellers in the new houses which are springing up between the church and the river. In addition to the unsatisfactory character of the people, the minister thinks religious life in Putney has suffered from the absence of unity—of anything that will bring the different bodies on to common ground.

But this, in a practical though minor way, has been accomplished at Unity Church, which was formed by a combination between Baptists and Congregationalists, and which is about to absorb another Congregationalist church. This latter, being smaller and situated on the lower ground, will be turned into a mission. The old minister of the larger church, who is about to retire, is, like all the rest, unfavourably impressed by the new population, describing them as fast, sporting and

theatrical, and he, too, finds religious work in Putney amongst all classes most discouraging, and the middle classes almost as hard to move as the poor. They are, he says, without interest in literature, culture or local affairs, and unwilling to attend evening meetings of any kind. He corroborates what others have said of the weakness resulting from lack of unity of spirit amongst the Churches, and complains that the Church of England fails to lead, except that the souped and pauperised poor are solemnly warned against Dissent. Those of the poor who attend religious services are mostly bought, and a 'cadging and ungrateful spirit' is the result: 'Going from church to church with the same piteous and untruthful tale, they suck the orange dry, and then throw it away.' Religious effort among them becomes an almost complete failure. His church opened a mission-room, but no one came to it; and 'United Gospel Tent Missions' have been held with empty benches. Every house in the poorer streets was visited, and many promises received, but of the hundreds that promised not one turned up. The only success to be recorded in this neighbourhood has been in the temperance cause. The Gospel Temperance Society took two thousand pledges in its first year, and its Saturday evening meetings in winter still draw an attendance of about five hundred.

Emmanuel Free Church of England has been mentioned as supplying the Gospel pure and undefiled to those who are offended by High Church ritual, and on these lines it still competes with the Putney parish churches; but St. Stephen's, its nearest neighbour, which was High, is now Low, and so the *raison d'être* of Emmanuel Church is partly gone. At present St. Stephen's has left them their school children, who had been got together by arduous competition. 'A vicious system,' said the minister with great frankness;

'we started two treats and got more children, but all the others now give two also; all the churches in Putney are alike in their hunt for the children, and the parents think they do you a favour if they send their children to you.' 'Well,' a parent will say, 'if you are not pleased with my child, so-and-so's have a better treat than yours, and I shall send her to their school.'

Putney seems to be badly off for young people's organizations. There is no Polytechnic, and the Y.M.C.A. has, we are told, been narrowed into failure by being in extreme Evangelical hands. There is a free public library, the gift of Sir George Newnes, but little is read except fiction.

Rich and poor are closely intermingled in Putney, because of the near approach of the high ground to the river. The hangers-on of the pleasure-seekers who find their way to the river side are a degraded set, and the action of the Churches does not tend to make them less so. A London City missionary who works among the river-side population, and has his hall in the low quarter called 'The Platt,' speaks of deterioration owing to the advent of those turned out by demolitions elsewhere. Some of the men live on the prostitution of their wives, or on their labour as laundresses. Others are connected with the river as boatmen and boat attendants, and the rest are, or call themselves, labourers. The moral level is very low, but the missionary has a large convenient hall, and in the filling of it is more successful than most; the rough children come to his school. The Church of England is the only other active agency here. As to the spiritual results attained he prudently prefers to say nothing. Of the godlessness of the upper and middle classes in Putney he speaks as others do.

Altogether there is perhaps no spot in London where religion plays a more unsatisfactory part than

it does in Putney, and the lack of Christian unity appears to be exceptionally marked. It may seem incredible that men sharing, in whatever way, the same responsibility, and seeking to serve the same Master, should pass and re-pass in the streets for a quarter of a century and never speak, and even, we are told, stand together by the bed-side of the dying without acknowledging each other's presence ; and one's mind turns back to the Plymouth Brother's uncompromising logic, which regarded lack of unity as proof that the Churches were not of God. But it must in justice be said that this want of harmony applies only to the relations between the Established Church and the Nonconformists. Among themselves the Free Churches have no serious difficulties.

It would not necessarily follow, even if the Churches were all of one accord, that they were of God ; nor if of God that it would be given to them to win the world for Him, but their claim to be heard and to be trusted would stand on firmer ground, and we should no longer eagerly look round to find some other road.

As the unsatisfactory state of things in South Battersea has brought about the Pentecostal League, so in Wandsworth and Putney there was a great Gospel revival conducted by Moody and Sankey when these Evangelists visited England some years ago. The success of their meetings was so extraordinary and the fervour so great that to commemorate and continue the work Down Lodge Mission (undenominational) was established, and the Congregationalists built the large permanent mission hall, which was given the name of 'Memorial Hall.'

The empty benches of these halls are a great contrast to Mr. Moody's crowded tents, and, except in the hearts of a few, little seems to remain of that great wave of religious sentiment.

§ 3

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

The Borough of Wandsworth covers the huge area of 9285 acres, being, with the exception of Plumstead, by far the largest sanitary district in London. A considerable part is, of course, as yet unbuilt upon, but the population has increased more than five-fold in the last half century, and is now about 212,000. The rateable value is over £1,400,000. By the new Act the Board of Works gives place to a Borough Council, which also absorbs the duties of a number of other bodies—Vestries, Overseers, Burial Boards, Library and Baths Commissioners—but the area remains practically the same.

For sanitary purposes, the district is divided into five sub-divisions, viz., Clapham, Putney, Streatham, Tooting and Wandsworth. Each of these has its district office, its medical officer, surveyors and sanitary staff, so that although there is a head office at East Hill, the work is largely decentralized.

The late Vestry is criticised rather severely in some quarters for jobbery, but on the whole the local administration is reported as being satisfactory, steady-going, and rather Conservative, lacking in enterprise. When, however, we come to particulars, especially as to the building going on, there is a chorus of condemnation. 'Much of new housing very shoddy; likely to breed slums.' 'A great deal of vile building.' 'New houses jerry built and looking miserable after a few years.' 'Scandalous jerry building in new middle-class streets; many houses in one of these streets tumbling down already.' 'Owing to the rapid increase in population the jerry builder has had his chance.' 'New houses vilely built.' 'Housing bad,' in this place and in that, is an opinion often repeated. But it is not all so.

The report from one district says, 'Housing rather unequal, both as to the houses themselves and the character of the occupants. Some own their own, and these houses have the best appearance; others are dilapidated and look quite old, though all are comparatively modern.' 'Housing better in some districts,' says another, but, it is added, they 'look more respectable than they really are.' In other parts the new building is reported as quite satisfactory. 'Good.' 'All that can be desired.' So might it all be. There is a considerable amount of crowding, and everywhere rents are rising. 'More room is badly wanted. There is a great demand for small houses,' but ground rents are high, and it is said that small building does not pay.

Health on the whole is good; death-rate low. Open spaces are plentiful. Public baths have been recently provided for Wandsworth, and there are public libraries.

The administration of the Poor Law in the Wandsworth and Clapham Union is what is termed 'sympathetic;' 'rather lavish with out-relief.' 'Too tenderly administered,' says one of the relieving officers. The policy is reported to be one of large out-relief, not accompanied by adequate inquiry and discrimination, so that the number of improper cases receiving out-relief is large. Since the recent order of the Local Government Board suggesting more adequate relief, but greater discrimination, the Board (this critic says) has followed the former advice, neglecting the latter. A more kindly view is that they 'do their utmost to relieve out-door distress.' The Guardians include four representatives of labour who would not send anyone to the house, and are ready, it is asserted, to give out-door relief to almost anyone. But the administration is not without its defenders, both as to the policy

pursued and as to the care with which it is carried out. The indoor poor are not numerous, but include a considerable contingent of able-bodied loafers, to deal with whom some 'penal and repellant' scheme to force them to work is regarded as necessary. Some have been sent to the special workhouse for able-bodied males at Kensington.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES. Map T. (Vol. V., Part II., Chapter III.). Wandsworth and Putney.

Adjoining Maps—**N.** Fulham (Vol. III.). **E.** Battersea and Clapham (p. 196).

General Character.—The map comprises part of Putney and Wandsworth. Every class is represented from 'yellow' to 'black.' The rich live on and around Putney Hill on the west side of the map, the middle and lower middle classes on the high ground south of East Hill and in the new streets north of West Hill and between Putney Station and the river, the poor in the Wandle Valley and on the low ground by the river-side. Newness is a feature of middle class Putney. The rich and the poor are those who have been there longest.

Poverty Areas.—In Putney itself there is old village poverty connected with labourers in market gardens and riverside work; in Wandsworth Plain there are more poor people of the same sort, and a patch of black caused by the presence of low-class prostitutes; off the Warple Way is long-established 'labouring' poverty, and south of High Street a newer class of poor inhabitants, chiefly labourers employed in the building that is taking place on either side of the Wandle Valley.

Employments.—The rich and the middle class are either 'retired' or employed in the City: they go into business by the District or London and South Western Railway services. There are also a large number of theatrical people attracted by the late trains on both lines. Employment within the locality is found in gas works, piano works, flour, paper and other mills in the Wandle Valley, and in house building. Wandsworth in old days was known for a settlement of Huguenot cloth weavers. Their industry has gone; only their tombs remain.

Housing and Rents.—In the new streets of two-storeyed houses off the west side of Wandsworth Common the rents asked are £35 to £40 a year, they are tenanted by people of good working or lower middle-class, lodgers paying about 5*s* for two rooms with the use of a bath. In the working-class part of Wandsworth 9*s* 6*d* is asked for four rooms, and it is complained that there was a rise of 2*s* per week in the five years preceding 1899. New flats are a feature of the river side. On the low-lying ground of the Wandle Valley slums are in process of formation, due largely to ill-built houses on 'made' land; a six-roomed house can be had here for 7*s*. The worst part of this district lies along Garratt Lane, outside the south-eastern edge of the map.

Markets.—High Street, Putney, and Wandsworth High Street are the chief markets of the district. They are also shopping streets for the well-to-do.

Public-houses.—Licensed houses cluster thickly round All Saints' Church, which is the centre of Old Wandsworth; another group is in Putney High Street. It is again possible to pick out old-established poor streets by the number of beerhouses. 'Jug' licences are most frequent on either side of the York Road on the eastern side of the map, and grocers' licences in East Hill, High Street, Wandsworth, West Hill, and the Upper Richmond Road, which are all parts of the same long main road running East and West across the district.

Places of Amusement.—Though many theatrical people live in Putney and Wandsworth, the only local place of entertainment is the Wandsworth Theatre of Varieties in South Street. Fulham Theatre is just across Putney Bridge and easily accessible. Here the river begins to be a 'place of amusement.'

Open Spaces.—There is plenty of open space at present, with the river on the North; market-gardens, and Putney Heath and Barnes Common on the West; the large fields and gardens attached to private houses on the eastern slope of Putney Hill; and the open Wandle Valley on the South; but much of it will soon be covered with houses. The market gardens on the north side of Putney Bridge Road have been converted into a public park, and it would be well if the low ground on either side of the Wandle River could be secured for the same purpose. Wandsworth Common touches the district on the East.

Health is good except in the Wandle Valley, which is on a bed of damp clayey alluvial soil. Putney itself is on sand and gravel and so, with the exception of a narrow band of London clay, is the rising ground on the eastern bank of the Wandle. The western bank, which rises to Putney Heath, is chiefly of London clay, interspersed with patches of gravel until the highest ground is reached. Putney Heath is all on gravel.

Changes of population.—In Putney the wealthy are moving into the regions of fashion in West London or out of the metropolis altogether. They are replaced by a well-to-do class forming a semi-genteel aristocracy. The 'red' streets north of the railway tend downwards. The newest streets round the market gardens are frankly 'pink.' On the other hand there is an increase of comfortable houses for a 'red' class on West Hill and off the Kingston Road, which are probably drawing away the better tenants from what used to be 'red' streets between Richmond Road and the river. The poor drift in from Battersea along the river side, and then turn South along the Wandle Valley.

Means of Locomotion.—The District Railway gives communication with West and Inner London on the North, and Wimbledon on the South. The Windsor and Richmond branch of the London and South Western Railway cuts the map East and West, with stations at Wandsworth and Putney. Horse tramways run from North Street *viâ* Battersea Park Road and from East Hall *viâ* Lavender Hill to Westminster Bridge and the Borough. Further facilities by means of electric trams (needed everywhere) are wanted in particular along the Upper Richmond Road giving access to Richmond on the west, and eastward in conjunction with a proposed line up East Hill leading to High Street, Clapham. A line along the Kingston Road would open up Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common, and another southwards along Garratt Lane would help the poor districts of Summerstown and Lower Tooting and prevent their becoming to South-West London what Hackney Wick is to the North-East.

[Note.—For Places of Worship in Wandsworth and Putney, see list in Chapter II., p. 195.]

CHAPTER IV

ILLUSTRATIONS

§ 1

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT

(1) *A Wesleyan inauguration Service on Sunday Evening.*

There was a large audience in the new church, many no doubt being there from other congregations. The preacher, who was the leader of the circuit, showed a strong tendency to flatter his flock, which is a common weakness with Wesleyans. The sermon consisted of congratulation from first to last, only asking from his hearers continued efforts to spread amongst others the light vouchsafed to them. Something must be allowed for the occasion, but the effect was rather sickening, and it is quite impossible to suppose that anyone could receive spiritual benefit from such a discourse—happy if not the worse for it. After the service there was a 'ten-minutes prayer meeting'—guaranteed not to exceed that limit of time. For this about half stayed. Two members of the congregation were put up to deliver the prayers.

On the following Sunday evening at the same church the regular minister was preaching. The large building was not crowded, but was well filled. I thought there were over one thousand persons present, mostly lower middle-class people with, no doubt, many of the serious working class who are indistinguishable from them; smartly or carefully dressed, rather young than old; practised chapel-goers, accustomed to hymn singing. This church, which is one of the latest and best that has been built by the Wesleyans, has an architectural 'choir'

behind the pulpit or platform of the minister. At the extreme end is the organ, lifted on high, and from it to the pulpit slope down the seats of those who lead the singing—a choir of about forty voices, male and female. Beneath this gallery are the vestries and offices of the church. The minister sat alone. The choir led, but the congregation threw in a great volume of sound, with good taste and knowledge of singing. The minister's text was taken from the Epistle to the Hebrews, and he spoke of 'the writer' in place of saying St. Paul, expressing a hope that no one would be shocked when he said it was supposed to be not Paul but Apollos who wrote this Epistle. It was not at all in St. Paul's style, he added. The text concerned the anchorage we should have 'on Christ beyond the veil.' He pointed out that the author of the Epistle used the word 'hope' (typified by the anchor) where St. Paul would have used 'faith,' and said that hope was the faith that looked to the future. The sermon was an eloquent appeal addressed, he admitted, especially to young men of his own age (he appears to be under thirty) to lay hold of this sure anchorage in order to ride out the waves of uncertainty and the storms of doubt and temptation to which all were liable. An excellent sermon; honest, well thought out, and well delivered; and deserving of the great congregation that has been gathered here.

(2) *Pentecostal League.*

Exeter Hall was full on Wednesday evening, May 2nd, 1900, for the Annual Meeting. The audience appeared to be almost entirely lower middle and working class; perhaps one-third were men. There were on the platform a few ministers of religion, but no one of note, and many lady members of the League, wearing what may perhaps be called the League bonnet. There were to be 'five minutes'' addresses by representative clergy and ministers of all denominations. A Primitive Methodist from South Wales, a Baptist minister from Cambridgeshire, and an English Presbyterian made up the list. The speakers were warned that five minutes was the limit, but no one had to be pulled up; they each testified to the value the League had been to themselves and their

congregations. After each speech a rousing hymn was heartily sung to organ accompaniment. Those present seemed interested, and interjected aspirations were common, very much as at a Salvation Army meeting. A short address from one of the lady missioners of the League brought the miscellaneous speaking to a close.

Mr. Reader Harris, who presided, made many little speeches, managing and controlling everything. Among other things he read out a long list of well-known people who had sent letters expressing sympathy with the objects of the League, these including the two Archbishops, the Bishops of London and Rochester, Dr. Horton, Mr. Hugh Price Hughes, the Moderator of the Presbyterian body; the ex-Chairman of the Baptist Union, &c., &c.

The chairman's address was the final one, and was followed by a prayer and a short pause for silent prayer. Then, almost without an interval, he asked all to remain with eyes closed, in the attitude of prayer, and those who wished to make a special supplication to the Spirit for any gift of which they stood in special need, to rise from their seats, still with closed eyes. Large numbers did so; nearly half of those present. A final hymn, the collection, and a benediction said by one of the ministers present, brought the meeting to an end. Any wishing to join were invited to come forward and do so. Very few showed signs of responding, but perhaps most had been already enrolled.

In July of the same year, I attended one of a series of meetings of the League, also at Exeter Hall, on a week-day. It was the afternoon meeting, and Mrs. Reader Harris was announced as the speaker. It was held in one of the smaller rooms. There were present some hundred and twenty persons of whom about twelve were men. Men were hardly expected. Mr. Harris presided, however, and took the principal part, speaking before and at a greater length than Mrs. Harris. All the women who sat on the platform wore dresses of simple, neatly fitting pattern, and small black bonnets tied beneath the chin, amounting almost to a uniform, and many of those in the body of the hall were similarly attired; others had plain straw hats; there was no

female finery to be seen. All had the look of being pious people and were difficult to class otherwise. Only one or two had the air of being socially 'ladies,' and only one or two seemed to belong to 'the poor,' but not a few might have been either, or anything between. "Costly your habit as your purse affords" is not the plan adopted here. Mr. Harris's address was on the gifts of the Spirit and doubtless had been repeated often. That of Mrs. Harris was more original. She took as text a sentence from the Book of Proverbs about hunters who are too lazy to roast what they catch, which she boldly averred bore on the same subject as the remarks of her husband, for we had to use the gifts properly as well as ask for them. It was a quiet, orderly, religious meeting, without stress or excitement of any kind. The only peculiarity was a series of consecutive prayers, all quite short, delivered by five of those who sat on the platform, four women and one man speaking besides Mr. Harris; they were short, plain, spiritual appeals, with nothing ecstatic or ejaculatory about them. The whole service lasted rather more than an hour and broke up very slowly. Those present were a friendly party and entered into conversation with each other, the platform people moving about among the rest, while many crowded round the bookstall where a considerable trade was done in Mr. Harris' Sermonettes and other publications of the League, including photographic portraits of its leaders. The sermonettes sell at $\frac{1}{2}d$ each, or $4\frac{1}{2}d$ the dozen; they are very numerous, and are an armoury. Mr. Harris often refers to them, saying, 'I have worked all that out' in so and so. 'You will find the answer to that question' in this or that. The subjects are such as: 'Effectual Prayer;' 'The Baptism of the Holy Ghost;' 'The possible and actual in religious experience,' and there are many others. The language is simple, but in that lies their sole power. They seem to lack the ring of enthusiasm or of religious emotion as much as they do moral insight or intellectual force. It is the same so far as my experience goes, with his oral addresses. In them he descends at times to a colloquial level of small jokes, and the pose is always that of a man of superior education addressing uneducated or less educated people

—features which only make the success attained the more wonderful as an exhibition of the working of the Spirit upon men's souls to day.

At Speke Hall the ordinary Sunday evening service gives place at 8 o'clock to the 'Pentecostal' one. On the occasion of my visit some left, and others entered, for the latter service, those who had sat in the choir either coming down into the body of the hall or going away. Of those who had been present for the previous service, most stayed on. The organist was still at the organ, and we sang some hymns, sitting in our places. There was some effort, both before and after the address, to make the hymns stimulating, and the prayers were cast in the same direction, but I thought without much effect. The address of Mr. Harris had for text the words 'No man cared for my soul,' or, he said, as it might better be translated, 'No man prays for my soul,' but that, he added, was not the case here to-night. He spoke shortly, and ended by appealing to any whose souls had been touched by God this day to rise quietly in their places, we all remaining meanwhile in silent prayer. Those who rose were acknowledged with 'thank God,' and then sat down again. The process was dreadfully like an auction. Again and again it was our 'last chance,' or 'one minute more,' with the hammer raised as it were. The hesitation that might be felt was minimised as much as possible by the explanation that it was not a 'whole salvation' that was implied in the confession called for, but only a recognition that to them God had spoken in some special way that day. And when at the end all who had stood up were asked to do so again, and then to come up nearer, it seemed rather like a trap. But perhaps it was well understood what the action would involve. The number who moved forward was not so great as I had expected, judging from the previous proceedings. Perhaps some shirked at last, or possibly some had been supposed to move before who had not really done so. In these cases there is always a tendency to make the most of everything, and at best it was a very doubtful piece of religious business.

(3) *Conversions in connection with the United Methodist Free Church.*

. . . . . A week of revival meetings in Battersea Park was mentioned, from which it was said fifty conversions had resulted, but we could not learn that any had become members of the church: some were 'tramps' who had been helped into the country, and passed on to other churches; some were children of twelve to fourteen, who have been gathered into the Sunday school. It is evident that in these cases analysis is necessary. Our informant told us of his own conversion fifteen years ago at a revival meeting, when about forty in all were converted, of whom half have stood firm. He, himself, seems to have gone to the meeting with the intention of 'coming out.' It had been in his mind to do so ever since his father's death a year previously. Conversions such as his, which are the result of careful thought, are, he thinks, usually lasting; those which are due to the emotion of the moment seldom endure.

(4) *Spiritual Phenomena.*

"Conversion" must be recognised as an undoubted spiritual phenomenon. It may be the voice of God that is heard, but happily He speaks in many other ways also. Spiritual forces permeate life as do the physical forces. Like light or heat, or electricity, or the organic agencies of nature, they can be induced. In this sense we *can* call spirits from the vasty deep, easily enough. They *do* come when rightly called, and are strangely unaccountable in their proceedings. Such phenomena may be of God, but to suppose that to be affected in these ways is to be absolutely or exclusively or even particularly in touch with God, is a mere delusion.

§ 2

PASSING NOTES

(1) Walking across Clapham Common on Sunday afternoon, I fell in with two parties of the Salvation Army. The first and the stronger of the two offered nothing out of the ordinary, but the other, a very small affair provided only with cymbals which both men and women used, was remarkable. A hymn was sung, into the reading of which, verse by verse, with comments, a deep-featured strong-voiced man threw a great deal of passion. The lines I remember were, 'I saw One hanging on the tree, who fixed His dying eyes on me.' On ME, he repeated, and the words rang out. There was an anti-climax to this in the jolly tune to which the verse was set, hardly exceeded as a contrast by the gay fluting of a passing bicyclist, who, managing his machine with his feet, performed this *tour de force* at the head of a column of his friends, rattling along the roadway, by side of which the little Salvation party and their audience of half-a-dozen children were gathered.

Near the larger group of Salvationists, in the centre of the Common, I joined a party of men closely crowded round one more elderly, who was seated on a chair. He was, I believe, a Secularist, and between him and some of the others a very courteous and good-humoured discussion was being carried on. As many as could hear had crowded in, for there was no speechifying or raising of the voice. The man talked as in a room, with polite deference, and without the least heat. The subject was, I gathered, the value of the Bible story of Creation as compared to any other version we had.

Holy Trinity Church, at the east end of the Common, was filled with children for afternoon service—not those who attend the Sunday school, though they may perhaps have been there among the rest, but the children of the congregation, small and large. The rector spoke to them on prayer, and his words were very simple and good. At the other church belonging to this parish there was

also a children's service, but those present were from the schools, gathered close up to the chancel-rail, with only a few others sitting behind. The curate talked to the children from the steps, and then, walking up and down the aisle, asked questions, helping the children to find the answers, on the nature and uses of temptations and on dangers to body and soul.

(2) South of Clapham High Street and the Common, the ground is still largely unbuilt on, but this airiness and open space is not likely to last much longer. The assault is only just beginning, and to-day the huge solid Cubitt-built houses, with their gardens and splendid old trees and magnificent broad roads, remain almost as they were. But now that Lincoln House, the largest of all the estates, has passed into the speculative builders' hands, the change will probably be very rapid, and another ten years is scarcely likely to leave much of what still remains one of the most delightful and charming pieces of London. With the possible exception of Cheyne Walk, there is hardly anything in London more beautiful or more interesting than the old Georgian Terrace of Church Buildings and the old group of Georgian houses facing Cock pond.

(3) The Caius College Mission building looks like, and indeed is, the chancel of a big church, finished off as well as may be and very likely never to be extended further. As it stands, it seems to have been built in two portions: first the basement, which now serves for the children's Sunday school, and other purposes; and above, at a later period, the fragment of a church already described. In the basement there was a gathering of little children, and above, where the Sunday morning service was proceeding, those present were still all children, though older than the others, with a few adults in charge. Near by are handsome club premises for men and boys on one side, and for girls on the other.

(4) . . . . . The Methodist Free Church had had a May day festival, with crowning of the May Queen.

(5) . . . . . Mills' yard has been adapted for the use of the gipsies, stabling having been built for the horses and water laid on. Eight or nine family vans were standing in it, and at the far end was a small round-topped hedge-row tent. The vans were being prepared for Easter with fresh coats of red and blue paint, and the cocoanut poles and other paraphernalia were being touched up. In the tent a young fellow was making clothes pegs.

Not far from this encampment the missionary has a small hall. It is half of a railway arch, the other half, from which it is divided by a wooden partition down the middle, being a blacksmith's shop. Through the chinks and crannies near the roof the smoke from the smithy has penetrated and made black lines on the painted boards. The place holds about one hundred and fifty, and is fitted with desks and a platform. On the walls are texts and coloured mottoes. The surroundings of the hall are very dirty, the only approach being by an unpaved road, which affords access also to some stables and to a gipsy encampment.

(6) . . . . . The streets which are in course of building just to the north of Wardley Street are the worst of the many badly built new streets in the Wandle valley. They, like those in Fulham, near Wandsworth Bridge, are streets which have begun 'purple,' a rare phenomenon. The houses, both the bad and the comparatively good, are identical in character and appearance with those in Fulham. There is unquestionably an evil future before many of them. As in Fulham, so here too, building is perhaps proceeding too quickly for the authorities to exercise efficient control, otherwise what has happened can only be explained as the result of official corruption.

Wardley Street itself has all the marks of 'dark blue and black;' broken windows, bread strewn about, dirty barefooted children, doors open, women sitting on door steps or pavement, suckling children, and the smell of dirt everywhere. Lydden Grove is equally bad, but Bendon Valley is slightly better. The River Wandle runs along the west end of these streets, and the low ground on the opposite bank is being filled up with filthy decaying

refuse. A cart could be seen discharging gully flushings, a thick, black, stinking liquid. On the ground so raised streets are planned.

On the north side of Wardley Street is a yard with six or seven travelling vans set up on props, not wheels, and fully tenanted. A magnificent gipsy queen stood at the door of one of the houses.

SYLLABUS OF THE ENTIRE WORK

Life and Labour of the People in London

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Chap. I. Descriptive
II. Covent Garden
III. Com. Lodging Houses
IV. Homeless Men

Part III. Outlying London, North of the Thames

Chap. I. Special Districts, West and North
Chap. II. Walthamstow

Part IV. South London

Chap. I. The District Generally
Chap. II. Battersea

Conclusion

East London, Central London and Battersea compared

VOL. II.

Part I. London Street by Street

Chap. I. Introduction
II. Statistics of Poverty
III. Classification and Description of Streets

Part II. Appendix

Classification and Description of the Population of London by School Board Blocks and Divisions

VOL. III.

Part I. Special Subjects

Chap. I. Blocks of Model Dwellings
(1) Statistics
(2) Influence on Character
(3) Sketch of Life in Buildings
II. Influx of Population (East London)
III. Influx of Population (London generally)
IV. The Jewish Community (East London)

Part II. London Children

Chap. I. Classification of Schools and Children
II. Elementary Education
III. Secondary Education
(1) Boys
(2) Girls

VOL. IV.

The Trades of East London Connected with Poverty

Chap. I. Introduction
II. The Docks
III. The Tailoring Trade
IV. Bootmaking
V. Tailoring and Bootmaking—East & West
VI. The Furniture Trade
VII. Tobacco Workers
VIII. Silk Manufacture
IX. Women's Work
X. Sweating

Second Series: Industry

VOL. I.

General Classification of the Whole Population

Part I. The Building Trades

Chap. I. The Whole Group
II. The Different Sections
III. Conditions of Employment
IV. Organization
V. Abuses—Social Conditions

Part II. Wood Workers

Preliminary Statement
Chap. I. Cabinet Makers
II. Carriage Builders
III. Coopers
IV. Shipwrights

Part III. Metal Workers

Preliminary Statement
Chap. I. Engineering, Boiler-Making, &c.
II. Blacksmiths
III. Other Workers in Iron and Steel
IV. Workers in other metals

VOL. II.

Part I. Precious Metals, Watches and Instruments

Preliminary Statement
Chap. I. Jewellers, Gold and Silversmiths
II. Watches and Clocks
III. Surgical, Scientific, and Electrical Instruments
IV. Musical Instruments and Toys

Part II. Sundry Manufactures

Preliminary Statement
Chap. I. Glass and Earthenware
II. Chemicals
III. Soap, Candles, Glue, &c.
IV. Leather Dressing, &c.
V. Saddlery and Harness
VI. Brush Making

Part III. Printing and Paper Trades

Preliminary Statement
Chap. I. Printers
II. Bookbinders
III. Paper Manufacturers
Chap. IV. Stationers
V. Booksellers and Newsagents

Part IV. The Textile Trades

Preliminary Statement
Chap. I. Silk and Woollen Goods
II. Dyeing and Cleaning
Chap. III. Hemp, Jute and Fibre
IV. Floorcloth and Waterproof

VOL. III.

Part I. Dress

Preliminary Statement
Chap. I. Tailors and Bootmakers
II. Hatters
III. Milliners, Dress and Shirt Makers
Chap. IV. Trimmings, Artificial Flowers, &c.
V. Drapers, Hosiers, Silk Mercers

Part II. Food and Drink

Preliminary Statement
Chap. I. Millers, Sugar Refiners, &c.
II. Brewers and Tobacco Workers
III. Bakers and Confectioners
Chap. IV. Milksellers
V. Butchers and Fishmongers
VI. Grocers, Oil and Colourmen
VII. Publicans and Coffee House Keepers

Part III. Dealers and Clerks

Preliminary Statement
Chap. I. Shopkeepers and General Dealers
Chap. II. Costers and Street Sellers
III. Merchants and Clerks

Part IV. Locomotion, &c.

Preliminary Statement
Chap. I. Cab and Omnibus Service
II. Carmen
Chap. III. Railway Work
IV. Gardeners, &c.
V. Merchant Seamen and Lightermen

Part V. Labour

Preliminary Statement
Chap. I. The Docks and Wharves
II. Coal Porters and Gas Workers
Chap. III. Warehousemen and Messengers
IV. Undefined Labour

VOL. IV.

PART I. PUBLIC SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL CLASSES

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT
CHAP. I. Civil and Municipal Service
II. Municipal Labour, &c.
III. Soldiers and Police
IV. Law and Medicine
V. Art and Amusement
VI. Literature and Education
VII. Religion

PART II. DOMESTIC SERVICE

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT
CHAP. I. Household Service, &c.
II. Extra Service

PART III. THE "UNOCCUPIED" CLASSES

Persons living on own Means, Pensioners, Retired, &c.

PART IV. INMATES OF INSTITUTIONS, &c.

CHAP. I. Occupations
II. Pauperism at Stepney
III. A Picture of Pauperism
IV. A Picture of Pauperism (*continued*)
APPENDIX. Summary of Stories of Stepney Pauperism

VOL. V.

PART I. COMPARISONS

CHAP. I. Crowding and Apparent Poverty
II. Crowding and Earnings
III. Born in and out of London and Living in Inner or Outer Circle
IV. Size and Constitution of the Census Family
V. Age Distribution of the Occupied Classes (illustrated by diagrams)
VI. Status as to Emplo ment
VII. Increasing and Decreasing Trades

PART II. SURVEY AND CONCLUSIONS

CHAP. I. Characteristics of Modern Industry
II. London as a Centre of Trade and Industry
III. The Localization and Diffusion of Trades
IV. Large and Small Systems of Production and Employment
V. Characteristics & Training of London Labour
VI. Trade Unions
VII. The Hours of Labour
VIII. Methods of Remuneration: Time and Piece Work.
IX. Irregularity of Earnings
X. Rates of Wages
XI. The Choice of Employment
XII. Industrial Remedies
XIII. Expenditure and the Standard of Life

Third Series: Religious Influences

VOL. I.

London North of the Thames: The Outer Ring

Introduction

Chapter I. Outer East London

(*With Sketch Map*)

(1) General Character
(2) The Response to Religion
(3) The Church of England
(4) Other Religious Work
(5) Special Areas
(6) Police, Drink, and Disorder
(7) Marriage and Thrift
(8) Housing and Transit
(9) Local Administration

Coloured Maps with Notes and List of Places of Worship

Chapter II. The North East

(*With Sketch Map*)

(1) Hackney: Past and Present
(2) The Response to Religion
(3) Church-going and Working Men
(4) Local Details of Religious Work
(5) Areas of Special Difficulty
(6) Social Initiative of Religious Bodies
(7) Police, Drink, and Pleasure Seeking
(8) Local Administration

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

Chapter III. North London

(*With Sketch Map*)

(1) General Description
(2) Middle-class Religious Development
(3) Evangelical Work and Methods
(4) Special Areas and their Treatment
(5) Religion and Class
(6) Local Administration

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

CHAPTER IV. THE NORTH-WEST
(*With Sketch Map*)

(1) Complication of Class
(2) Highgate and Kentish Town
(3) Camden Town, Regent's Park and Somers Town
(4) The Housing and Condition of the People
(5) The Lisson Grove Area (with coloured map)
(6) Portland Town
(7) St. John's Wood and Hampstead
(8) Local Administration

Coloured Maps with Notes and List of Places of Worship

CHAPTER V. ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. II.

London North of the Thames: The Inner Ring

CHAPTER I. WHITECHAPEL AND ST. GEORGE'S EAST
(*With Sketch Map*)

(1) Changes
(2) Spitalfields
(3) Whitechapel
(4) St. George's-in-the-East, Wapping and Shadwell
(5) The Roman Catholics
(6) Charitable Agencies
(7) Other Methods
(8) Local Administration
(9) Summary

CHAPTER II. BETHNAL GREEN, HAGGERSTON, &c.
(*With Sketch Map*)

(1) The Boundary Street Area
(2) Other Portions of Bethnal Green
(3) Oxford House
(4) Religious Work in Haggerston, &c.
(5) Standard of Life
(6) Public Buildings and Local Administration

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

CHAPTER III. HOXTON, ST. LUKE'S AND CLERKENWELL
(*With Sketch Map*)

(1) Hoxton
(2) St. Luke's
(3) Clerkenwell
(4) Local Administration

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

CHAPTER IV. WEST-CENTRAL LONDON
(With Sketch Map)

(1) West of Gray's Inn Road
(2) South of Oxford Street and Holborn, East of Regent Street
(3) Russell Square to Langham Place
(4) Local Administration

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

CHAPTER V. ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. III.

The City of London and the West End

Part I. The City

CHAPTER I. THE CHURCHES
(With Sketch Map)

CHAPTER II. A SUGGESTION

CHAPTER III. ILLUSTRATIONS

List of Places of Worship

Part II. The West

CHAPTER I. WESTMINSTER AND SOUTH PIMLICO
(With Sketch Map)

(1) Old Westminster
(2) South Pimlico

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

CHAPTER II. THE INNER WEST
(With Sketch Map)

(1) General Plan
(2) Mayfair
(3) Marylebone and Bayswater
(4) Kensington
(5) Brompton and Belgravia
(6) Chelsea
(7) Paddington
(8) Local Administration

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

Chapter III. The Outer West
(With Sketch Map)

(1) Introductory
(2) Kensal New Town
(3) Queen's Park
(4) Kensington Park
(5) A Piece of Unbuilt London
(6) Notting Dale
(7) Local Administration

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

Chapter IV. The Outer West *(continued)*

(1) Shepherd's Bush and Hammersmith
(2) Fulham
(3) Local Administration
(4) London, North of the Thames

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

Chapter V. Illustrations. West London

Chapter VI. Illustrations. North of Thames generally

VOL. IV.

Inner South London

Chapter I. West Southwark and North Lambeth
(With Sketch Map)

(1) Introductory
(2) From the Borough to Blackfriars Road
(3) From Blackfriars Road to Lambeth
(4) Lambeth Road to Vauxhall
(5) Side Lights
(6) Local Administration

Chapter II. Newington and Walworth
(With Sketch Map)

(1) The Church of England
(2) The Baptists
(3) Wesleyan and other Methodists
(4) Congregationalists
(5) Independent Missions
(6) More Side Lights
(7) Local Administration

Chapter III. Bermondsey
(With Sketch Map)

(1) Comparative Poverty
(2) Four Poor Parishes
(3) Nonconformists and Missions in the same area
(4) Conditions of Life
(5) The Riverside
(6) Remainder of the District
(7) Local Administration

CHAPTER IV. ROTHERHITHE
(With Sketch Map)

(1) The Riverside North of the Park
(2) The Neighbourhood of Southwark Park
(3) Round the Docks
(4) South of the Park
(5) Local Administration

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

CHAPTERS V. AND VI. ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. V.

South-East and South-West London

Part I. The South-East

CHAPTER I. DEPTFORD
(With Sketch Map)

(1) General Character
(2) Old Deptford Parishes
(3) Newer Deptford
(4) The Southern and Western Parishes
(5) Local Administration

CHAPTER II. GREENWICH
(With Sketch Map)

(1) Opening
(2) The Poor Part of West Greenwich
(3) The Remainder of West Greenwich
(4) East Greenwich
(5) East Greenwich (continued)
(6) Local Administration

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

CHAPTER III. WOOLWICH, ETC.
(With Sketch Map)

(1) Charlton
(2) Three Aspects of Woolwich
(3) Religious Effort in Woolwich
(4) Plumstead
(5) Various Opinions
(6) Social Influences
(7) Local Administration

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

CHAPTER IV. ILLUSTRATIONS

Part II. The South-West

(With Sketch Map)

Chapter I. Battersea

(1) Nine Elms and the Neighbourhood
(2) From Battersea Park to Lavender Hill
(3) Old Battersea and the Riverside
(4) Local Administration

Chapter II. Clapham

(1) From the Religious Point of View
(2) From the Home Point of View
(3) Clapham to Kennington

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

Chapter III. Wandsworth and Putney

(1) The Valley of the Wandle
(2) Putney
(3) Local Administration

Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

Chapter IV. Illustrations

VOL. VI.

Outer South London

Chapter I. The Belt of Crowding and Poverty

(1) The Whole District
(2) North and West of Clapham Road
(3) The Sultan Street Area
(4) The Poor Part of Camberwell
(5) The Belt of Crowding and Poverty (continued)

Chapter II. Beyond the Belt of Crowding—Southward to the Hills

(1) From Clapham Road to the S.E. and Chatham Railway
(2) South of Peckham Road

Chapter III. Further South

(1) The Western Side
(2) The Eastern Side
(3) The Concourse on Peckham Rye
(4) Social Condition
(5) Local Administration

Sketch Map, and Coloured Map with Notes and List of Places of Worship

Chapter IV. Outlying Southern Suburbs
The Western Portion
(*With Sketch Map*)

(1) From Roehampton to Balham
(2) From Balham to Upper Tooting
(3) Summers Town and Tooting Graveney
(4) Streatham
(5) Tulse Hill and Brockwell Park
(6) Norwood
(7) Dulwich

General Notes on District and List of Places of Worship

Chapter V. Outlying Southern Suburbs
The Eastern Portion
(*With Sketch Map*)

(1) Sydenham, Anerley and Penge
(2) Brockley and Forest Hill
(3) Lewisham
(4) Blackheath, Lee and Eltham
(5) Local Administration

General Notes on District and List of Places of Worship

Chapter VI. Illustrations

Appendix to Vols. I. to VI.

Statistics.—Sex, Birthplace and Industrial Status of Heads of Families, and Social Classification, by Registration Districts or Sub-districts

General Index

VOL. VII.

Summary of Religious Influences

Chapter I. The Church of England
II. Illustrations (Church of England)
III. The Nonconformist Bodies
IV. Illustrations (Nonconformists)
V. The Roman Catholic Church (with Illustrations)
VI. Mission Work
VII. Illustrations (Mission Work)
VIII. Other Religious Effort (with Illustrations)
IX. Settlements and Polytechnics
X. Aspects of Religion
XI. Position of Religion in London

FINAL VOLUME

Conclusion and Summary

Part I. Some Comparisons
II. Notes on Social Influences
III. Notes on Administration
IV. Conclusion

Appendix.—Summary of Contents of Entire Series

Map of Inner London—showing Places of Worship, Elementary Schools and Public Houses.

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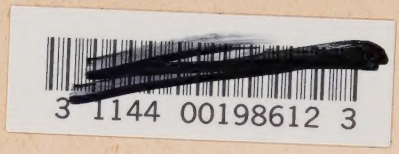
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